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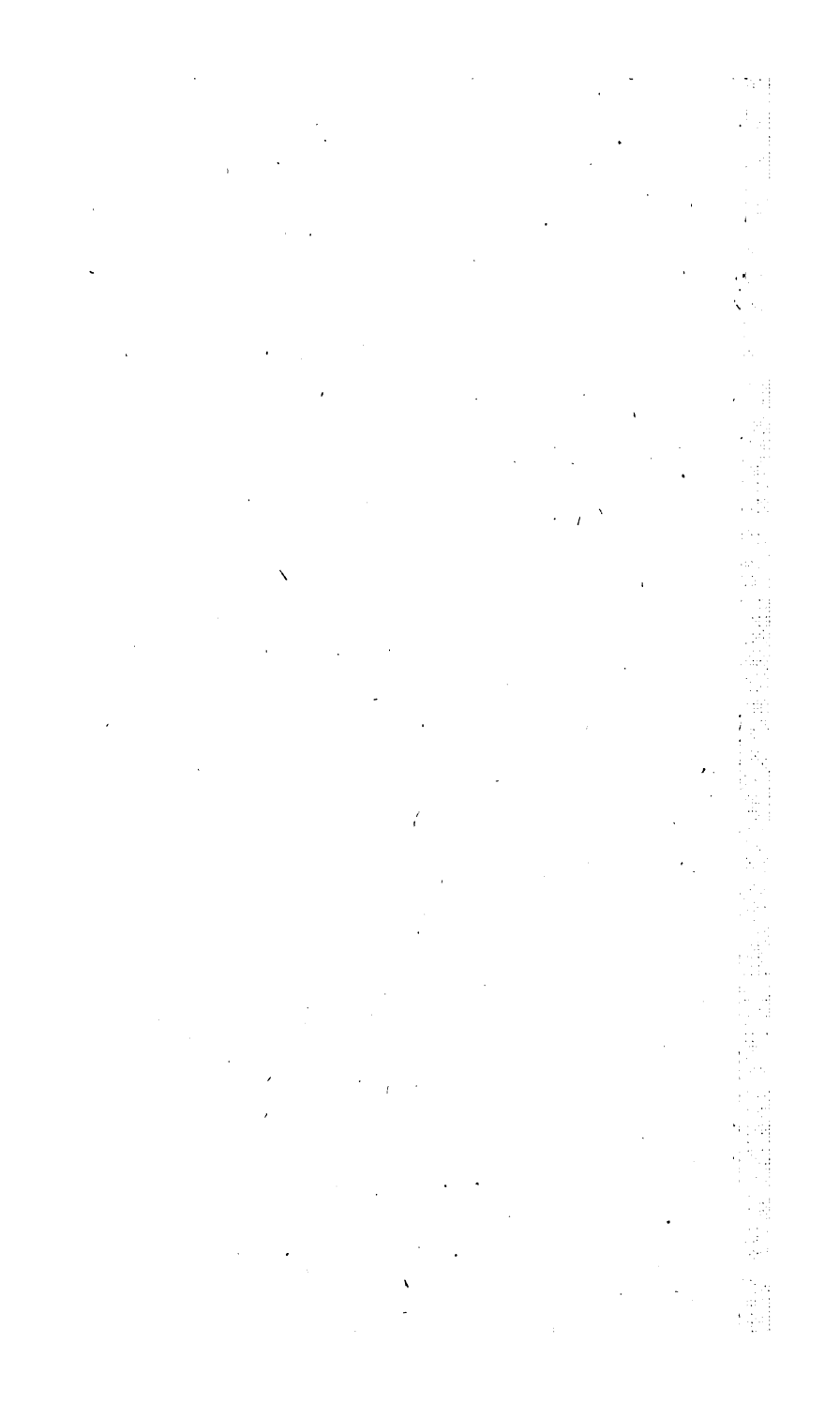
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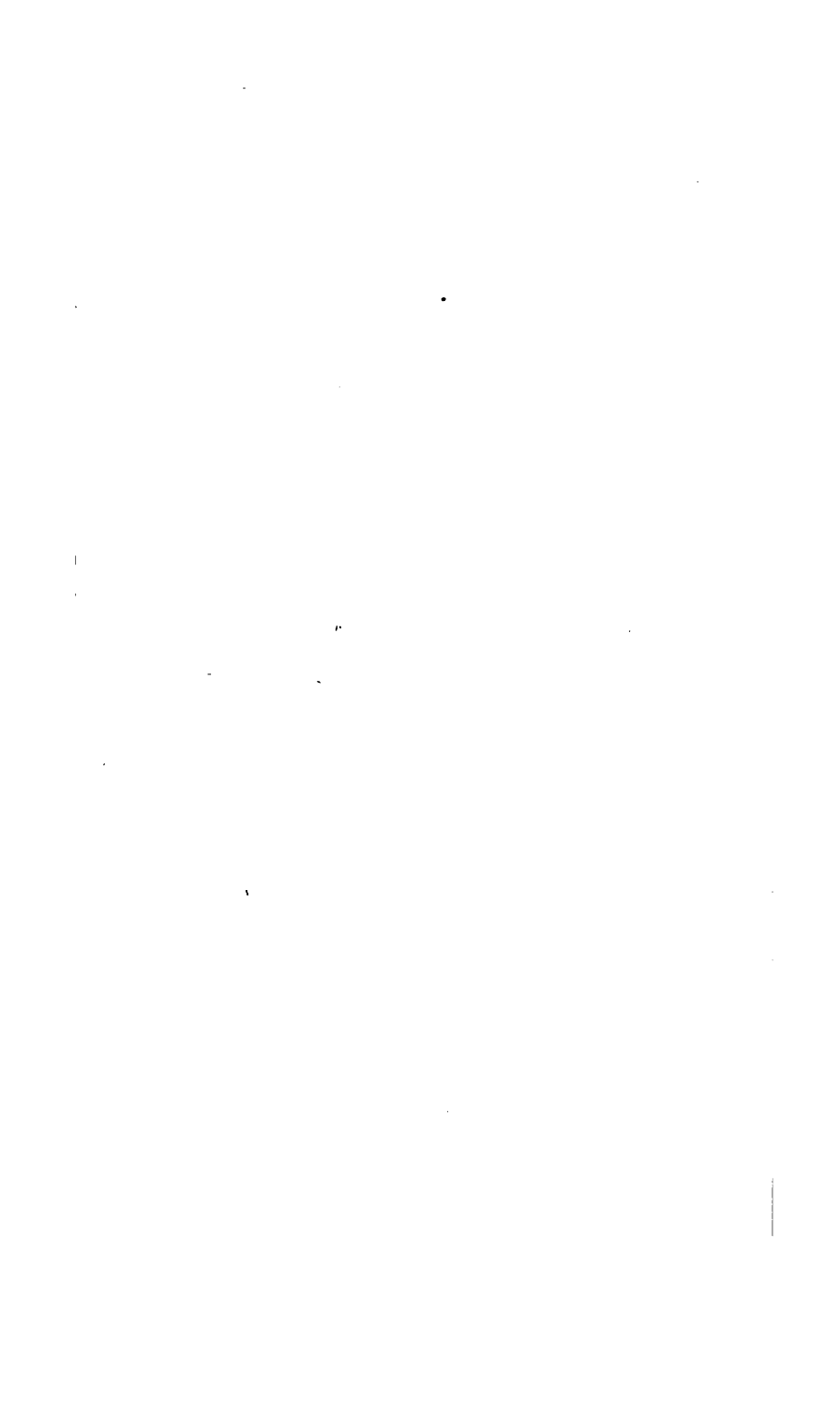
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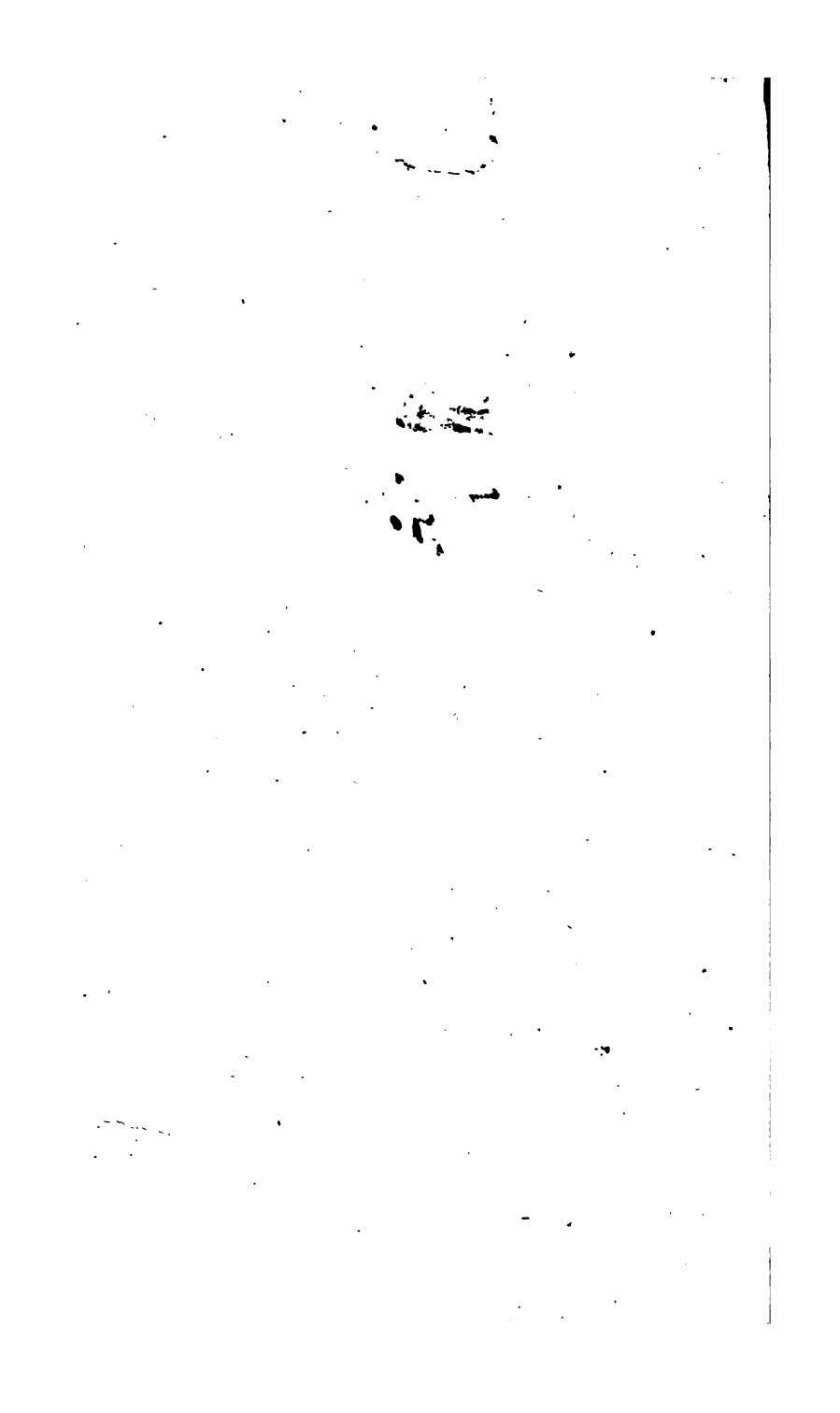




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*A Josephine*  
**MEN AND MANNERS,**  
*A NOVEL.*

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

BY FRANCIS LATHOM,  
AUTHOR OF THE  
MIDNIGHT BELL, CASTLE OF OLLADA, &c.

A NEW EDITION.  
VOL. I.

*"I sit down to write what I think, not to think what I  
shall write."*

CERVANTES.

L O N D O N :

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# MEN AND MANNERS.

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## CHAP. I.

### *A Bachelor's Fairing.*

MAY-DAY was the anniversary of Hill-den fair; the children of the reverend Mr. Charles Morden, the village curate, were just returned, at sunset, to their paternal roof, and recounting the various and innocent pleasures they had experienced in laying out the little sums they had each hoarded up against the anticipated day of general joy, when Jonathan Parkinson entered the parsonage parlour, carrying in his arms a pretty little girl, of about two years old.

“Here is a strange adventure, Charles Morden,” said he, setting down the child:

VOL. I:

B

“I have



" I have found this little innocent weeping for her mother, whom she has lost, she says, and cannot find again ; I have been making inquiries for her, but no person of the name she doth mention is to be heard of."

" Poor mammy Ellis !" sobbed out the child.

" Do not thou cry," returned Parkinson ; " thou shalt be taken care of, till we do find thy mother.—Thou dost know I am a bachelor, Charles, and having no children at my house, I have no one proper to take care of them, so I have brought this poor child, whom the common law of nature doth order us all to protect, to request that she may be amongst thy children, till her parents can be found for her."

The child was still crying ; Mrs. Morden rose, and, with a manner that expressed more interest in its fate than a vocabulary of tender words could have done, she took it in her arms, kissed it, wiped the tears from its cheeks, and strove to amuse its thoughts,

thoughts, by placing before it some of the toys which one of her children had just brought from the fair.

"What's your name, my dear?" said Mr. Morden, advancing to the child.

"Rachel Ellis," was the answer.

"I'll step to the inn, and try if I can gain any intelligence of her mother," said Mr. Morden; and, taking up his hat, immediately left the room.

"Do you live in this village, my love?" said Mrs. Morden.

"No."

"Where then?"

"A long way off."

"How far?"

"I don't know."

"What's the name of your home, my dear?"

"Mammy's cottage," said the child.

Jonathan Parkinson was not given to ask frivolous or unmeaning questions; in the present instance, however, he deviated from his usual mode, and, taking up the string of

inquiries which Mrs. Morden had begun, he said, "Dost thou love thy mammy?"

"Oh, yes!" was followed by a fresh flood of tears.

Parkinson paused a moment, then giving a sharp hem, and making an exertion to swallow his spittle, as was usual with him when affected, he continued, "Thy mammy was very good to thee, then?"

"Yes!" was with difficulty articulated in answer.

Parkinson walked to the window, though it was too dark for him to discern objects.

"Was your mamma a quaker, little girl?" said Eugene Morden, the curate's eldest child, and now in his sixth year.

The child stared, unconscious of her inquirer's meaning.

"Why do you ask that question, Eugene?" said Mrs. Morden.

"Because, mamma, I saw a quaker-woman, with just such a little girl as this, in the fair this afternoon."

During the last sentence, Parkinson had regained

regained his former station near the table, at which sat Mrs. Morden: the reader need hardly be informed, that the sect Eugene had named was that of which Parkinson was a member.

"Should'st thou know the woman again?" said Parkinson.

"No, I don't believe I should," answered the boy; "I did not look in her face."

In a few minutes Mr. Morden returned: his inquiries had proved fruitless; no person of the name of Ellis had ever frequented the inn, or village, by what he could collect from the party in the Rose and Crown kitchen, which consisted of some one member from almost every dwelling in the parish.

"It is strange, indeed, no inquiries are made after the child," said Mrs. Morden.

"They may not have reached us, as ours had not found them," replied Parkinson: "all that we can do is, to preserve the child in safety to-night, and to endeavour to find its parent to-morrow."

"It shall be safe here," returned Mr. Morden.

"Make thyself easy, little girl," said Parkinson, "thou wilt be well here; do not thou cry; thou wilt have some nice supper I know;" he then kissed it, ~~and was de-~~

~~not~~ "You never kiss me, Jonathan Parkinson," said Emily, who was sitting on the floor nursing her doll.

"Thou art not in distress, and in need of soothing to cheer thee, like that poor helpless babe," said Parkinson; "but I will kiss thee, nevertheless, if it will please thee."

Emily jumped up to meet the lips she considered it so rare an indulgence to kiss, and Parkinson then departed.

The promised nice supper diverted from her forlorn situation the thoughts of the little foundling; and conjectures of who she could be, occupied the tongues of Eugene and his sister Emily, till one party fatigued with the pains, and the other with the pleasures of the day, they were equally happy to enjoy the composure of sleep.

## CHAP. II.

*Men as they should be.*

IT rarely happens that men of different religious persuasions unite in the exercise of moral duties, however they may separately practise them, and strike out a path of friendship which may be trodden with mutual safety. When two such characters are found in the situation just described, the virtue which fills their hearts, and the goodwill towards mankind in general, which teaches them to strengthen good qualities by acting in union, and thus to produce the greater quantity of good to man at large, cannot be too highly commended: such were the characters of Jonathan Parkinson and Mr. Charles Merden; each too well convinced of the other's purity of mind to lessen the high estimate at which he held it, by inquiring the source from which it

frang: their conclusion of virtue was that drawn by the immortal bard:

“ 'Bout modes of faith let angry zealots fight;  
He can't be wrong, whose life is in the right.”

Jonathan Parkinson, for so he was simply called at his own particular desire, held a rich and well-cultivated estate in the parish of Hilden; his ancestors had possessed it before him. Mr. Morden had also been bred in the village where he now lived; and thus opportunity was given, for cultivating into manhood a friendship founded in youthful days, on a congeniality of sentiments and pursuits.

The world called Parkinson a quaker; he called himself *a man*; he wore plain clothes, and a flat-crowned hat, because his ancestors had worn them, and that he did not wish to seem to offend their memory by a change which could have afforded his existence no superior happiness than already he enjoyed; he retained somewhat of the stiff mode of expression used by the sect from whom he was descended, partly from  
the

the same reason for which he retained their manner of dress, but more principally that, having been habituated to hear and speak it when a boy, he found it a habit rather difficult to correct; but his mind was unwarped by prejudice, his understanding strong, his judgment liberal and discerning, and his heart rich in benevolence towards mankind.

Mr. Morden was the only son of a farmer in the village of Hilden; he was a father who better knew than is generally understood by men, how to turn what he possessed to the advantage of his son; he did not rear him in ignorance, that, at his death, the world might say, "Farmer Morden had left his son such or such a sum of money," but he gave him, as soon as he was arrived at years to receive it, an education which could never leave him destitute amongst the fortuitous ills of life. The son was worthy of the father he possessed; his assiduities gained him an early fellowship in his college, which he resigned, shortly after coming into possession of it, for



the happier end of calling her he loved by the tender name of wife ; an union indubitably happy in its result, as worth, not wealth, had fixed his affections on the possessor of his heart.

Happy was the circumspection of farmer Morden ; for misfortune clouded his latter days, and he died, leaving his son possessed only of the living he had bought him, and outstanding debts to the amount of twelve hundred pounds.

The heart of Morden was too nobly proud to encounter the risk of a sneer from the creditors of his parent : he sold the living he enjoyed at a price inferior to its real worth, in order that he might obtain immediate payment, and discharged his father's debts : the purchaser appointed him his curate ; and, where he had before been possessor, he was now the happier dependant :—he had before only known what it was to enjoy the gifts of an indulgent parent—he had now experienced the heartfelt blessing of wiping off the only stain that  
could

could have attached itself to that loved parent's memory.

The estate on which stood Jonathan Parkinson's mansion, remarkable only for its neatness and simplicity, was divided into a farm, extensive plantations, and pleasure-grounds.

The profits of the farm enabled him to bear the expences of cultivating the latter to a high degree of perfection, and the latter rendered useless the parish workhouse. He knew that the most beneficial charity to the labourer, and his rising family, is constant employment; thus he excused to himself the sums he expended on his improvements, on the consideration of their ultimately promoting the welfare of the society in which he resided, by being a continual spur to its industry.

Nor was the produce of his farm less a means of charity, than the cultivation of his grounds; not that he gave it blindly to whoever asked relief at his hand, he was too well aware, that to support in idleness is

the siffer-vice of that avarice, which sees a fellow-creature perish unmoved, but, during the varying seasons of the year, he sold to the poor round about all the necessaries of life at reduced and constant prices.

Jonathan Parkinson had once been on the point of marriage, but his mistress had jilted him; and he had, from that time, determined not to suffer a passion, which had once abused his feelings, again to lay hold upon them: he did not abjure the sex because he had been mistaken in one woman, but he resolved not to become the dupe of a second.

Had his nature been other than it was, he could not have beheld the state of Mr. Morden's family, and have disputed the existence of connubial felicity, or the ecstasies of paternal fondness.

The curate was the father of three children, Eugene, Emily, and John; and Mrs. Morden was at this time in a state of pregnancy.

This, then, was the situation of affairs in the

the village of Hilden, when Jonathan Parkinson, in one of his accustomed evening walks, found the little Rachel crying for her mammy Ellis, on the skirts of the village Fairstead.

## CHAP. III.

*A new Errand for a Crier.*

**E**ARLY on the following morning the little Rachel awoke, and " Mammy Ellis ! mammy Ellis !" accompanied with a look of surprise, was the first sound that escaped her lips.

Emily immediately ran to her mamma with the information, that the little girl was awake, and crying for her mammy.

Mrs. Morden rose, and, going to the child, dressed her, and exerted every effort to lull the grief, which the repose she had enjoyed had given her fresh strength to exert.

Emily's new doll proved the greatest inducement to Rachel to restrain her tears, and, whilst she was admiring its tinselled robe Mrs. Morden took the opportunity of examining her clothes, and searching a little  
pocket

pocket which hung by her side, which she had not thought to do the evening before; in the hope of finding some better clue to the discovery of her parent than the child was able to give herself: her pocket contained only some halfpence, and a little handkerchief, marked at one corner with a single R. and her linen was distinguished by the same mark.

With the breakfast-hour arrived Jonathan Parkinson: he learned from Mr. Morden that no application had been made for the child, and the latter again went to the Rose and Crown, to be informed whether his inquiries after Rachel's parent had been attended with any success.

The landlord said, he believed almost all the parish had been in his house the evening before, being fair-time, and that he had not missed asking every one of them, if they knew any woman of the name of Ellis, who had been to the fair and lost a child, but they had all declared themselves unacquainted with the name.

Mr.

Mr. Morden returned home, and communicated this intelligence to his friend Parkinson.

"Well!" said Parkinson, "if the woman did not designedly leave her child on the highway, meaning to desert it, she surely is somewhere in the parish, in expectation of hearing where it is lodged; I will, therefore, tell Thomas Smith to ring his hand-bell through the village, and announce where she may be found."

Thomas Smith, the sexton, bellman, fadler, and patten-maker, of the village, was, at this moment, fortunately passing by the parsonage; Mr. Morden saw him, and, tapping upon the window, Thomas obeyed the well known signal, and entering the kitchen, chatted with Susan, until Mr. Morden summoned him into the parlour, to learn by rote the following sentence:—  
 "Whereas a child, who calls herself Rachel Ellis, and who lost her mother yesterday in Hilden fair, is now at the reverend Mr. Morden's."

The

The art of reading had been left out amongst Tom Smith's numerous acquirements : thus, whoever had occasion to employ his oratory, was under the necessity of engraving upon his memory, by dint of repetition, the point in question ; which task, Tom, like the boy who could not tell what letter followed great M, but when he began at great A, rendered somewhat tedious, by the, to him, necessary prologue of " Oh yes ! oh yes ! oh yes !" and epilogue of " God save the king !" which had given many a one, who never pretended to be a wit on any other occasion, room to add the facetious conclusion of " hang the orator !" and, indeed, excusable was the old saying for those who had to instruct him.

At length Tom was primed, off he started, and, parrot-like, he repeated his lesson all the way he went, lest it should escape his memory. The bell jingled at every accustomed corner ; every one ran out at the well-known sound of Tom's bell, but no one could



could give him any information that might spare him a single recital of his lesson.

In two hours and a half he returned to the parsonage with the sorrowful information, that all his exertions had been to no purpose, and that he was tired to death with walking and talking.—“Go into the kitchen, and get a pot of ale, Tom,” said Mr. Morden.—“Thank you, sir :” Tom’s voice returned in an instant to call down Susan to draw it, and he walked to the kitchen as nimble as a pyc-wipe.

“Ah!” said Parkinson, with a sigh, as Tom left the room—this was his usual exclamation when he considered an end in pursuit as unattainable : his friend, the curate, who as perfectly understood all his signs as words, said, “I don’t despair yet, though the mother seems not to be immediately in the village ; I don’t consider this as a proof of her having purposely left her child to the bounty of the public—she may be still in search of it.”

“Do

"Do thou take my word for it, Charles Morden, she will never claim it," said Parkinson.

"I hardly think it possible a mother can be so unfeeling as to desert her own child," said Mr. Morden, kissing Emily, who was climbing his knee.

"Poor little Rachel has no papa to kiss her!" said Emily.

"But she shall, nevertheless, not want a protector!" exclaimed Parkinson: "she was designedly cast upon my bounty by the hand of Providence, and I will be her father: not that I will too proudly arrogate the whole of so great a charge as the rearing of one, who is designed for an useful member of the world, to myself; I do neither understand sufficiently the culture of the mind, nor the care requisite for the body:—the latter I will intrust to thy wife—the former to thyself, Charles, knowing thee competent thereunto; but, that I may not forget one so peculiarly put into my hands, refresh my memory, by calling upon me for  
twenty-

twenty-five pounds, quarterly, to defray the expences of her maintenance."

Mr. Morden too well knew how firmly Parkinson adhered to any charity once conceived, to venture to reply, that he had intended to have continued the ~~care~~ inmate of his house, till it should be inquired for by its relatives, which, from his own feelings, he did not doubt would be ere long; and thus only answered, that it should share the attention of Mrs. Morden, and himself, with his own children.

Jonathan Parkinson dropped a tear at the prospect of the little foundling's future happy life, and Mr. Morden and his wife were too sensible to the dictates of humanity, to let slip a moment which they might make happier than the last to their little charge.

Oh thou enviable felicity! resulting from the will and means to ease the burthen of life to a fellow-creature! how preferable art thou to the gratification of selfish appetites! thou carriest satisfaction in thy retrospect.

Can

Can the glutton look back with satisfaction on the mass of provocatives, with which his palled appetite has been strengthened into the exercise of nature's function? Can the dying miser reflect calmly on the objects of misery he has suffered to pass him unrelieved, whilst his full chests cracked beneath their ill-begotten riches? Can the wealthy libertine bear to reflect, if he ever does reflect, that the sums it has cost him to deprave the few he has been able to bend to his detested purposes, have cursed him, though necessity had hired them to his will; and that those very sums might have brought him tenfold the blessings of those who never knew depravity? No action can be happy in its being, or result, which does not charm doubly on reflection.

## CHAP. IV.

*A Man in Miniature.*

**JONATHAN** Parkinson was right, and Mr. Morden for once mistaken in his naturally-drawn supposition, that the little Rachel would be inquired after by her mother. — A week elapsed; and no such person appeared to claim her; a month passed on, and no inquiries were made concerning her; in so much that Mr. Morden began to believe, as Jonathan Parkinson had before done, that it was something more than chance which had separated the child from her mother: the only point which puzzled him was, that the child herself had declared, that her mammy had been very good to her; a proof no doubt of fondness in the parent, and consequently, he imagined, a motive for struggling with the severe hardships of poverty, to keep her child with her; and

and no other reason could he imagine, for a mother's casting her child on the bounty of the world : however, he soon ceased to debate on a subject which he knew it impossible for him to resolve. It sometimes, however, made its way into his thoughts, as a matter of surprise : he more than once communicated them to his friend Parkinson, who felt, he said, the truth of the curate's argument ; but how was he able to resolve it better than himself ?

The infant mind is susceptible of any impression : the present is the object on which alone it is bent with fervor ; the past may sometimes cause it a short regret, or a momentary smile ; the future it knows not of : thus the little Rachel quickly became reconciled to her new situation ; sometimes she mentioned her mammy Ellis, but soon preferred Emily's doll to the recollection of her she had once so much bewailed.

The curate's children, educated to entertain that brotherly affection for all worthy objects, which alone constitutes the universal

tal happiness of mankind, loved Rachel as a real sister; and their attentions and caresses gained them in return, the full love and confidence of her grateful and innocent heart.

Thus passed on the summer months : towards the end of September, Mrs. Morden was delivered of a still-born child ; a difficult labour had reduced her to a state of extreme debility, and on the eighth day she expired, while imagined by her fond husband to be only in a swoon.

Still Mr. Morden was comparatively happy : 'tis not fortitude, nor resignation, no, nor religion, that can support us with decency in the hour of separation from our best beloved ; the balm of such a wound is single, is rare ;—its name is friendship : its powers beyond the tongue's description ; its price in heaven alone.—Mr. Morden possessed it : Parkinson was the active friend, who could sooth without softening the heart into weakness, and encourage it to bear the storms of fate, without the affectation of cold stoicism.

The mind can never be totally forlorn, while it possesses objects which call forth its tenderness :—when reflection began again to dawn, as the ecstasy of grief subsided, Mr. Morden saw himself bound, by the death of his wife, to become a double parent to his children ; their education it had been his original design to undertake ; he had even made some slight progress in expanding the mind of his eldest boy, but he had now a more important task than that of forming the mind to knowledge—he had the mother's part to act, and guard the infant heart against the dangerous habit of slight immorality, or wanton cruelty.

The little Rachel was a child of the utmost good humour, and for her tender age betrayed not an unintelligent mind ; and Mr. Morden began to consider himself happy in the strange chance which had introduced her into his family, as she would prove a companion for his Emily.

The first seven years after Mrs. Morden's decease passed on without any material occurrence ; Eugene, though but thirteen years



old, had made a great proficiency in reading the Latin tongue, and many instances had exemplified that he understood what he read : he was a child of great personal beauty, manly activity, and courage ; he possessed withal strong intellects, and a praise-worthy desire of understanding, and having explained to him, whatever, in reading or in life, he did not comprehend.

Emily, a year younger than her brother, was not so happy in mental endowments, though nature had been equally bountiful to her person.

Rachel and John were of the same age, each in their eleventh year ; neither of them were striking in their persons, and their years were not sufficient for any decided opinion to have been, as yet, formed of their capacities.

Since the death of his wife, Mr. Morden had entirely secluded himself from the little society the village afforded, except that he as usual received the visits of his friend Jonathan Parkinson, and accidentally returned them ; giving up all his leisure time to his

his children, amongst whom Rachel was numbered.

Thomas Smith, the before-mentioned crier, sexton, sadler and patten-manufacturer, had a wife who followed an equal number of avocations as her beloved spouse.—They lived in a neat house in the village, whose lower front consisted of a door and two bow-windows burlesqued; one of these lighted the shop of the husband, the other that of the wife. The contents of the husband's shop have already been indicated:—the wife's was ornamented with a blue board, on which some letters were meant to inform you, that she dealt in tea, coffee, chocolate, tobacco and snuff; at another pane hung laces, garters, and children's rattles; at a third, halfpenny ballads and prints, which had baulked many a hungry child's stomach of a cake; at another square was the important information of play and story books to let out; and lastly, a glass of sugar-plums garnished with farthing cakes, and gilt watches, finished the attractive show of the

window: and here it was, upon the last-mentioned tempting articles, that the children at the parsonage were often regaled by Jonathan Parkinson's shilling.

It happened one evening about this time, that, while Emily, Rachel and John were debating whether sugar-plums or ginger-bread was the preferable purchase, that a boy apparently of about Eugene's age, dressed in a full suit of yellow clothes, with large worked gold buttons, his hair tied in a queue and powdered, and his face almost buried under a cocked hat, came into the shop, and asked Tom Smith, in a foreign accent, "if he was a shoe-mender?"

"A what?" says Tom.

"A cobbler, he means," cried Eugene, who had just before joined the party, and who was always ready to lend his assistance on every occasion.

"No," says Tom, "no, I am no cobbler; there is one next door."

The man in miniature stared, at a loss seemingly to comprehend Tom.

"I'll

"I'll show you where he lives, shall I?" said Eugene.

"As you please, sir," said the little stranger.

"No, it is as you please," said Eugene. Again the little man in yellow stared.

"Shall I show you?" continued Eugene.

"I thank you, sir," was the answer.

Eugene smiled, and went out to lead the way.

"Do you live in our village?" said Eugene, turning round to wait for the stranger when arrived on the outside of the door.

"I live here."

"Have you lived here long?"

"From yesterday morning."

"Where do you come from?"

"From Holland I come."

"What, across the sea?"

"Well, yes."

This discourse brought them to the cobbler's door:—"I am your most obliged servant, sir!" said the manifested boy, and went in.

Eugene ran back to his companions, and then returned with them to the parsonage, brim-full of his adventure.

## CHAP. V.

*"Fine Feathers make fine Birds."*

JONATHAN Parkinson was sitting, with Mr. Morden, on a bench in the little garden behind the curate's house, when Eugene ran to his father, and related what he had seen and heard: "I have been in Holland myself," said Parkinson, "and do easily conceive what thou dost tell me of this boy to be true; the children in that country are dressed more like dolls, to imitate those who are arrived at manhood, than like sprouts, which ought to differ from it to a certain period of their growth."

"But then he talked so odd a language," said Eugene.

"To that I can also give credit," returned Parkinson. "I was astonished, when I did visit an English friend of mine, who lived in trade at Amsterdam, to find how vitiated a lan-

a language his children, born in Holland, although of an English mother, had acquired, by conversing sometimes in English, sometimes in Dutch, and ever jumbling together the two languages, from facility of expression, or to make themselves the better understood when they were at a loss to explain themselves entirely in one."

Jonathan Parkinson had scarcely concluded this sentence, when a note was brought to Mr. Morden, which Susan said required an answer:—It ran thus—"Mrs. Hutchinbunck, an English lady just arrived from Holland, presents her compliments to the Revd. Mr. Morden, and, if he is disengaged, will do herself the pleasure of calling upon him to-morrow morning at ten o'clock, about a little particular business.—Rose and Crown, Hildden, Tuesday evening." Mr. Morden returned his compliments, and he should be happy to wait the lady's commands.

What particular business could a lady from Holland have with Mr. Morden, was a question

question the curate and his friend reciprocally inquired of each other ;—could it be any thing relative to the little Rachel, Mr. Morden wondered :—however, it was a point which her own presence only could elucidate, and he must wait her arrival for an explanation.

At the appointed hour, in the morning, a smart rap at the parsonage door called Mr. Morden from his little study, where he kept a kind of school with his children, into the parlour : he arrived in it just as the rustling of silk, and, “ Is your master at home ? ” with, “ Yes, ma’am,” for answer on the part of Susan, announced the visitor to have entered the hall :—the door opened, and a woman of tall stature, and great corpulency, with coarse features, and a face marked with the small-pox, entered.—Her hair was stiffly frizzed round her head, and then descended on the sides in two curls that dropped beneath each ear upon her shoulders, which being broad and high, afforded them a commodious resting-place ; on her head she wore  
a gauze

a gauze cap adorned with pink ribbands, which left the semi-circle of her hair uncovered; and on her cap she wore a flat chip hat trimmed with yellow tiffany, which was put on as if intended merely to shade her eyes from the sun, and display her ebony locks behind, which were confined upon her neck, in a tortoise-shell slide; her gown was an orange-and-blue-shot silk, with long sleeves, and a waist that seemed to emulate their length; her petticoat was of green quilted satin, over which she wore a flounced muslin apron trimmed with a broad old-fashioned lace, of a piece with that which adorned a large lapelled handkerchief, which hung loosely over her shoulders, and was fastened before with a pink breast-knot, and a rose diamond pin; her gold watch and embossed chain hung by her side; her petticoats were sufficiently short to display a large pair of silver buckles in her black stuff shoes; and in her hand she carried a parasol, which was fastened on the top of a walking-cane.



"Your servant, sir!" on the part of the lady commenced the introduction.

"Madam!" returned Mr. Morden with a bow, and reached a chair.

"Thank ye, sir." The lady seated herself.

Mr. Morden took a chair opposite to her.

"You have had a warm walk this morning, ma'am; the weather is hot."

"Ay, sir, a little or so, for this country; but nothing, as I tell my husband, to what we have had it in Holland."

"I had understood the difference of climate was not so much as some have conceived, ma'am."

"Lauk, sir!—Well, let them speak that have seen, say I:—Holland not hotter than England!—Well then!"

"What part of the Provinces did you reside in, ma'am?"

"Why, sir, in Rotterdam; and the beautifullest city, I may say, it is, in the world; to see the canals running through the streets, and the trees planted along-side 'em, and  
all

all the ships!—Ah! I shall never see its match, travel where I may.”

“ You mean to return thither then, undoubtedly, ma’am ? ”

“ No, sir ! no !—My husband’s sickly and poorly, always ailing, and the doctors say he’ll never be better if he does not live in his native air ; and I am sure I have no reason to wish him dead, he has always been kind to me, though he is but a silly sort of a man, as I may say.”

Mr. Morden bowed in silence, as simply acknowledging he heard her.

“ Well, sir, so here am I come over, and left as good a trade as ever was carried on between land and land ; not that I need so much regret it, for we have enough, thank God, to keep us above water in the world ; but it is vexing to leave incoming profits.—We landed the night before last from the packet at Harwich, and here we are on our way to Bristol ; Mr. Hutchinbunck is ordered there for his health ;—not that I think any thing on this

side the grave can do him much good ;— however, it is my duty to try.—Now, fir, I have a coufin, a farmer, Mr. Barnaby, within five miles of this place ; you may know him, I dare fay ?”

“ I have feen him,” replied Mr. Morden, while he inwardly thought what can be the fequel of this harangue.

“ Aye, we have all of us relations poorer than ourfelves,” continued the lady ; “ however, Mr. Barnaby is an honeft man, and as fuch I refpect him.—Well, fir, I have only one child, a fine boy—Richard, his name is—he’ll be fourteen years old come next Martlemas-day—fo my object in ftopping here was, to afk my coufin Barnaby, who, I know, underftands fomething about them kind of things, where I could put Dicky to fchool to beft advantage ; for befides that I wifh him to have a good Englifh education, as I can afford to pay for it, and fhalln’t grudge the money it may coft, I have a notion he would be a great deal of trouble to me to take care of in travelling ;  
efpecially

especially as God knows what may happen to his father 'ere long."

Again the lady paused, and Mr. Morden could again only answer her by a slight inclination of his head, as being totally ignorant what was the bent of her discourse.

"Well, sir, Mr. Barnaby gives me for his advice, that he does not think public schools would be at all suited to my son, because he has been brought up so much out of the English way of treating children, and moreover very pettishly done by, I must say, as being by himself;—so that he thinks, if you would consent to take him into your family, and give him an education, it would be the thing most to his advantage, and my happiness. So, sir, if you are agreeable to take him, I'll answer for his being a good boy, and your being well satisfied for your pains."

"I have never hitherto undertaken the education of any children but my own;" answered Mr. Morden.

"So my cousin tells me, sir; and that is  
the

the reason I am anxious Dicky should come to you, because I think he would be well done by, as I think, from what Mr. Barnaby says, you are not likely to take more ; and those that say they take only one or two young gentlemen, often double the number, and then add another to the end of them, and another again to oblige a friend, or a friend's friend, till at last they get more into their house than they can accommodate properly, or, what's worse, attend, as they should do, to their manners and education."

The truth of Mrs. Hutchinbunck's remarks apologized for her to the discernment of Mr. Morden for her bluntness of expression, and, rather at a loss how to answer, a momentary pause ensued ; the lady augured from it a favourable omen, which she concluded was not to be lost, and nodding her head significantly, she said, " Come sir, name your terms, I'll not stand for a trifle."

" Madam," replied Mr. Morden, " your request

request is so unexpected, and so much the reverse of any idea I had ever formed of thus increasing my family, that, though I must confess myself much indebted to Mr. Barnaby's recommendation, and still more to the earnestness with which you press me to the acceptance of so important a charge, I must beg a short time to consider whether I can comply with it."

"Lauk, fir! why one more or less can't make much difference."

Mr. Morden said he must turn over the matter in his thoughts, that he might be able to ascertain whether he could undertake the charge, without detriment to the youth, or his own family; on which condition alone, he would accept it.

"Well, fir," returned the lady, "I can only say you shall be liberally rewarded. Oh! how happy—" she rose and walked to the window which fronted the garden—"I should be to have him situated in this healthful place!—Poor boy! he loves a garden, it's new to him."

"I shall

"I shall have decided in a few hours what part it is becoming me to take," said Mr. Morden; "and will then have the pleasure of calling upon you at the Rose and Crown."

"Well, sir, good morning; I can say no more than what I have said."

"No more can I, ma'am, for the present;" replied Mr. Morden.

She advanced to the parsonage door, which was open; Mr. Morden attended her to it. Casting her eyes round towards the sky, she said, "No, no! I have felt the air of Holland and England, and know which is warmest;—but I like Holland for all that, or I should not have crossed the sea so often to go to it; and to be sea-sick, too, as I was every time, which is a dreadful feeling.—You were never there I suppose, sir?"

"No, ma'am."

"Oh you should see Holland; knowing what I now do of the fine sight it is, I would.

would not have died without seeing it for  
'all the world.—Good-morning, fir."

" Good-morning, ma'am."

" I'd soon be there again, please God  
my poor husband was either better or  
worse—Poor man!"—and away she stalked,  
the moving wonder of the gaping village.



## CHAP. VI.

*A new Trio—not set to Music.*

**M**R. Morden returned to his study, and having appointed each of his young students a task to perform in his absence, he set out for his friend Parkinson, to ask his advice; as was his usual custom in any matter of debate.

After much conversation on the subject, Parkinson summed up the decision in the following words:—"Thou hast enough, I know, Charles Morden, to live comfortably upon, but thou art not so rich that every additional little which thou can'st acquire to lay up in store for thy children is not an object of importance to thee.—Take, then, the boy; thou wilt have the double satisfaction of rearing up one a fit member for society, who might else be lost to it, and of knowing, that thou art exerting thy abilities.

lities to the best of thy power for the benefit of thy children.—Take, then, the boy home, Charles.”

Parkinson never formed a resolution, or gave counsel, till he had well weighed the subject in debate : Morden, therefore, never hesitated to be guided by his opinion, and proceeded accordingly to the inn.

Arrived there, he was ushered into a room ; where, round a table, on which the dinner-cloth was spread, and in eager expectation of its arrival, as it seemed, by the whole party being employed in brandishing and waving about their respective knives and forks, sat Mrs. Hutchinbunck unhatted, and with a coarse apron tied under her arms, to prevent her from soiling her dress : Master Dicky, so enveloped in a pinafore that he appeared to be on the point of undergoing the operation of shaving ; and still more extraordinary than these, in a three-cornered elbow-chair at the bottom of the table, sat a little man in a white night-cap and spectacles, with the corner

ner of a napkin drawn through the top button-hole of his coat, and thence expanded over his stomach.

A general confusion was produced by the entrance of Mr. Morden ; down clattered the knives and forks ; up started Dicky and his papa ; and Mrs. Hutchinbunck advanced at once to introduce her husband, and to apologize for the situation in which he found them.

Happily the loquacity of the party would for some time have prevented Mr. Morden's being heard, had he been exactly agreed how he ought to address the comical group before him.

" Reach me my wig, Dicky," exclaimed Mr. Hutchinbunck three times successively, bowing between each repetition of his sentence to Mr. Morden, and walking forward just sufficiently to discover that one of his legs was shorter than the other.

" I think I can flatter myself I know the result of your consideration, sir ;" said Mrs. Hutchinbunck smpering, looking what she thought

thought wife, and pointing to a chair, which Mr. Morden immediately occupied, while she placed herself in the next—"I think I know—"

"I wish you may, Peggy, I wish you may," interrupted her husband; "but don't count your chickens before they are hatched."

"I have consulted a friend of mine, ma'am," said Mr. Morden, as soon as he could find an opportunity of making himself heard—

"Right, fir, right," again interrupted Mr. Hutchinbunck; "two heads are better than one."

"I have consulted a friend of mine on the subject of undertaking the care of your son, and, by his advice, I will accept the charge of him."

"Well, then, I've got my wish," cried Mrs. Hutchinbunck; "Dicky will live at last where there is a garden."

"Well," cried Mr. Hutchinbunck, "no gains without pains, is a true saying; if we had not come all this way out of our way  
to

to Bristol, to consult my wife's cousin, Mr. Barnaby, about a school to send Dicky to, we had never got him so comfortably settled."

"Aye, it's me you may thank for the foresight and pains," returned the wife. "Well, fir," continued she, addressing Mr. Morden, "name your terms; promise but to do well by my boy, and I shan't haggle about a little money."

"If I were not convinced I could take him without injustice to you or himself," replied Mr. Morden, "I would not receive him into my house—Fifty guineas per annum must be my price."

"Well, fir," returned Mrs. Hutchinbunck, with affected composure, though it was apparent that the price was beyond her expectations, "I can afford it, and you shall have it."

Mr. Morden bowed.

"Entrance-money included, I suppose, fir?" added Mrs. Hutchinbunck, after a momentary pause.

"Mine

"Mine is not a school," answered Mr. Morden; "consequently I have none of these additions to the price I am to receive for your son's board and education."

"Well, fir, that's fair," said Mr. Hutchinbunck; "plain dealing makes quick-work, so the bargain's struck; and as we are in a hurry to get to Bristol, though I have not much opinion of the good it can do me"—"Nor I, God knows," parenthetised Mrs. Hutchinbunck—"Why Dicky shall come to you early in the morning."

"Very well, fir; preparation shall be immediately made for his reception," said Mr. Morden,

"And he shall bring the first quarter's payment with him," continued the father; "I dare say you would use him very well without, and give him learning to the best of your ability, which I don't doubt is a very good one, but there's no companion like the penny."

Mr. Morden was just beginning to observe, that this was what he neither expected

pressed nor desired—when the entrance of dinner, to which he was pressed to sit down, gave him a fair opportunity to escape for the present ; and he was departing, when Mrs. Hutchinbunck desired to know whether she might call in the evening, and see where Dicky was to sleep.

Mr. Morden could do no less than invite the party to drink tea at his house, an offer which was readily accepted ; and he then left this extraordinary trio to enjoy the luxury of their giblet-pye and smoking-hot crabs.

## CHAP. VII.

*Who would not travel, since "no one is a Prophet in his own Country," and the Opinion is so easily acquired out of it?*

IN the afternoon, at about half an hour after five o'clock, Mr. and Mrs. Hutchinbunck appeared at the parsonage, attended by Dicky, whose appearance was enriched by a gold-headed cane and silk tassels.—Mr. Hutchinbunck had exchanged his cotton night-cap for a well-powdered peruke; his dress was a snuff-coloured coat, with black waistcoat and breeches; and he exhibited a clean, though but a contemptible appearance.—Mrs. Hutchinbunck now wore only a dress cap on her head, and had added a pearl necklace, with a diamond locket, to the splendour of her dress.

Mr. and Mrs. Hutchinbunck agreed in the love of money, but they did not agree in the mode of making it pleasurable: Mr.



Hutchinbunck knew he was worth a pretty round sum, and, content with the consciousness that he possessed the ability of making his future life pass comfortably, he cared little whether the world knew he had it or not.—Mrs. Hutchinbunck derived from it only the pleasure of making, as far as her husband would permit her, what she called a show in the world, namely, being known to be worth money, and seen to be richly dressed.

Mr. Hutchinbunck was a man who did not wish to offend or injure any one, nor did he exert himself to please or benefit; he was what may be termed a quiet, unoffending man, and his sole knowledge lay in the quaint introduction of vulgar proverbs.

Mrs. Hutchinbunck knew enough of the world to have learnt that, to strive to please others, and to humour their opinions, is the chief step towards being used with civility, and well thought of in return; and it was rarely that she contradicted on any topic but one; this was, in taking the part of her  
beloved

beloved Holland, against those who might not be so willing, as herself, to give it superiority over every other place in the world.

Mrs. Hutchinbunck did not value it more than her debt of gratitude to the services it had rendered her entitled her to do: her father had kept an inn, of some repute, in Colchester, but died insolvent, when she was only ten years of age; her mother and herself were supported nearly half a year by the charity of their relations, when her mother dying of a broken heart, her uncle and aunt, who had taken the inn her father had by his death vacated, having no child of their own, charitably took her to live with them:

The cause of her father's misfortunes had been the result of inebriety: his addiction to this fault, had frequently rendered him inattentive to his guests, and even at times impertinent to them, which had so much weakened the repute of the house, that its present possessors found it but a very scanty income, to what they had hoped to reap from it.

A change of some kind, they could not immediately determine what, was resolved upon by them; and at the earnest persuasion of the captain of a merchant ship, who traded from a neighbouring port to Holland, they agreed to pass over to Rotterdam, and rent the only good-established English inn in that city, which was just vacated by the death of its landlord, who was a widower without children.

They accordingly packed up their alls, and their niece went with them.

Trade flourished, and all went on very well for ten years, at the expiration of which term the uncle died; and Mrs. Hutchinbunck was grown a fine girl of one-and-twenty.

Mr. Hutchinbunck, the son of the captain of a privateer, who had died in a French prison, finding many more wants in England than means to supply them, and having heard a cousin of his mother's speak much of the fortunes which were amassed by English merchants in Holland, he contrived, by scraping together what little pro-

perty he possessed, to buy his passage to Rotterdam, and was so fortunate as to get a station in the counting-house of a Scotch factor.

Fortune, in her wonderful turns, doomed him to move in a superior rank; for he had scarcely been in Holland a year, when a maiden aunt of his father's dying, her entire property devolved upon him, and a couple more months saw Mr. Hutchinbunck a ship-broker in a house of his own.—As a plain clerk, Mrs. Hutchinbunck had certainly been civil to him, because he was a good customer to the house, but not as a suitor of her own; “for though the man had shown her many civilities, she must own that she could never like a husband that limped.” But when, *Hutchinbunck, Ship-broker*, appeared, in gold letters, on a green board over the door of a neat house, on one of the pleasantest quays in the city, the gentleman, in her phrase, “became one of the civilest gentlemen who frequented their house; and she was sure it was a shame,

in any one; not to overlook such a trifle, as the slight defect in his gait."

Thus stood matters when the uncle died; and the following year the bond of love was tied between them.

The third year after their union produced master Richard, the first and last offspring of their connubial felicity.

The English families in the city were, as Mrs. Hatchinbunck truly said, too proud to visit her; and she confessed herself too proud to hold intercourse with what few English shopkeepers and servants the place afforded, in her present exalted situation: thus her only acquaintance had been amongst the middling station of the Dutch, whom she had flattered and obliged into being civil to her; and from this cause, jointly with the fortune her husband was amassing, arose her partiality for the country: now in England, she made it her constant subject of discourse and admiration, lest any one with whom she might chance to be in company, should not know how far she had travelled.

Her

Her aunt had died two years before they left Holland, and having bequeathed her entire property to her niece, she now began to arrogate consequence from her own importance as well as her husband's, and exerted authority in a point she had never yet been able to procure entirely to her satisfaction, namely, of laying out what she pleased in dress: the laws of Holland secured to her half their joint property (she having had no marriage settlement) exempt from the power of her husband, and she refused to quit that happy country which had given her this power till the same indulgence was bound to be continued to her in this.

The health of Mr. Hutchinbunck was, as she said, the cause of the voyage they had just taken, and also of their intended journey to Bristol. Mrs. Hutchinbunck had visited London with her aunt, the year before her marriage, where she had accidentally, and for the first time, seen her cousin Mr. Barnaby, a respectable plain farmer, who she recollected was then on his way

to place his two eldest boys at some public school, she knew not where; and on this flimsy idea, that he must be capable of recommending a proper place of education for her son, as having been thus employed before for his own, she had taken the packet from Helvoetsluys to Harwich, instead of sailing immediately to Bristol, where a seminary would as readily have presented itself, in order to ask the advice of her cousin, whom she had once before seen for about half an hour.

Mr. Barnaby, finding how the child had been brought up, wisely gave the advice she had communicated to Mr. Morden; and from this train of events, matters were concluded as we have before related.

## CHAP. VIII.

*Dutch Fashions.*

THE recital of the children's names, ages, and a multitude of other questions commonly asked where children are engaging, and either no other topic of discourse presents itself, or the minds of the parties do not sufficiently coalesce to render any subject started on one side of enough regard to the other to draw forth a rejoinder, wore out the interval between the arrival of the guests, and the bringing in of the tea.

"I hope there is no sugar in?" said Mrs. Hutchinbunck.

"No, ma'am," said the maid.

"I am glad of it," returned she, "for I don't drink that kind of sugar:" she then drew from her pocket a small silver box, out of which she took a lump of sugarcandy, and having placed it quid-fashion in her



cheek, she returned the box into her pocket, and began sipping her tea.

"Ay," said Mr. Hutchinbunck, "my wife has been accustomed to drink her tea so in Holland, and custom is second nature."

Mr. Morden inquired what was the custom alluded to, and Mrs. Hutchinbunck informed him that the Dutch, instead of sweetening their tea, like the English, with any sugar that melts quickly, suck a lump of sugarcandy during their tea-time, which lasts for every cup.

"Ay well, I am for the old English way," returned Mr. Hutchinbunck; "but every one as they like, as the old woman said when she kissed her cow."

"The custom is to be commended, from its principle of economy at least," said Mr. Morden.

"Lauk, sir! why one lump of this white sugarcandy, such as I always drink, is dearer than half a dozen or eight of the loaf-sugar,—ain't it?" turning to her husband.

believe

"I believe it is much of a muchness, my love," he answered.

Tea-time ended ; the first object of inspection was Dicky's intended bed-room :

"Well, to be sure, these English beds are airy, and that's a good thing," said Mrs. Hutchinbunck, resting by the bed-post ; "but they ain't half so snug in winter as the beds in Holland, that shut up like closets in the wall."

"I think, ma'am, they must be very unwholesome to those who lie in them, from their being so long obliged to breathe the same heated air," returned Mr. Morden.

"Lawk no, sir ! they are not so close as that ; though they are like closets, they have not all doors ; they are just like a great oven, with the door in the side, instead of the end, fastened against the middle of the wall."

The next pursuit was a walk in the garden.

"Is that your cow, sir ?" said Mrs. Hutchinbunck, peeping over a hedge at the end of the garden.

"Yes, ma'am."

"Well, I declare, then Dicky can have new milk from the cow every morning; oh! it will be vastly good for his health."

"It certainly shall be remembered, ma'am, if you desire it," said Mr. Morden. "This useful animal," continued he, "supplies us mostly with butter, as well as milk."

"Why, Dicky! come here immediately," vociferated Mrs. Hutchinbunck to her son, who was playing with the children at some distance from her. Dicky advanced riding on a garden-stick.—"Why, Dicky! what do you think?" continued she as he advanced; "if Mr. Morden does not make butter at home! so that you can have a sup of butter-milk when you like."

"Ay, but it must be sugared with treacle," answered the boy, "or I shan't love it."

"Yes, but I shall desire the gentleman to have an eye you don't eat too much of it though; you know you have often made yourself sick with that stuff; a little of it is very well, but too much of one thing is good for nothing," said Mr. Hutchinbunck.

"Do

“ Do you conceive butter-milk to be a wholesome food, ma'am ? ” asked Mr. Moriden in a tone which implied he had a contrary opinion of it.

“ You would not ask that, sir,” returned Mrs. Hutchinbunck, “ if you had seen the hundreds, and thousands, that live upon little else, as I may say, in Holland.”

Jonathan Parkinson at this moment entered the garden from the house, and the parties were, consequently, introduced to each other; when, after the usual salutations on such occasions, spoken without any fixed ideas, and whose meaning is understood without being heard, a silence of some minutes ensued: Parkinson seldom spoke without he was addressed; or had something to say; and the Hutchinbuncks were not sufficiently accustomed to the society of strangers, to revert to the topic which they had been discussing on his entrance, without making his appearance seem a restraint. The curate led the way to a conversation: addressing himself to Parkinson, he said, “ This lady and I were rather differing in  
opinion,

opinion, as you entered the garden, about the wholesomeness of a food which she tells me is much in use in Holland—butter-milk."

"The lady I do understand hath been in Holland, and, having seen its excellency, she no doubt doth recommend it," said Parkinson.

"Oh yes, sir, I do indeed; it is very nice, I think."

"It is better," returned Parkinson; "it is a wholesome and cheap food for the poor."

Mrs. Hutchinbunck's commendations had arisen solely from the pleasure the dish in question gave her own palate; Parkinson's observation rather puzzled her, and she waited to hear more of his meaning before she spoke again.

Parkinson continued,—“Before I did visit Holland myself, I had heard a friend of mine, who had been more than once in that country, give much commendation to the economy of their rural life; I accordingly did determine to make my visit there of two months, instead of one, which I had intended,  
and

and give up half my time to the investigation of a matter, which I did hope might turn out of some little service to my country, at my return, if I could gain any information to the advantage of the farmer or labourer ; I did say nothing of my plan before my departure, because I did know there are some in the world sufficiently illiberal to think that no other country doth enjoy so many advantages, or even any, that are centered in their own.—I do prefer my own country, certainly, to any other ; but it is the preference of habit, not of acknowledged superiority over others : I cannot think so unjustly of the Creator, as to suppose that he hath not given other countries good things to the amount of those which are to be found in that where chance has placed me.”

“ Oh to be sure, sir ! oh to be sure ! ” exclaimed Mrs. Hutchinbunck, putting on a look of great gravity and wisdom.

“ I did visit many farms, and what particularly pleased me, was the excessive neatness which was to be found in them all, the cleanliness of the cottagers’ children, and  
the

the sobriety and regularity of the labourer; what he earneth, his family doth share with him; he doth not waste his time in alehouses; when he doth drink any thing beyond what his cottage affordeth him, which is but seldom, and in great moderation, he doth buy it, and carry it to his home, that his family may partake of it with him; which custom I wish I could inculcate here, but I do fear it is in vain to counsel the determined man."

“What’s bred in the bone—” said Mr. Hutchinbunk; but his wife’s elbow, thrust against his side, checked the sentence on his tongue, and she eagerly said—“Well, sir, please to proceed; what other good discoveries did you make in poor Holland?”

“Many equally useful,” continued he, “which I do hope time, and some one better versed in the gift of conviction, and able to write them for general inspection, will bring at last into use; but I must confess, that I did think none of greater importance than the general introduction of the food the pupils mention amongst the poor.”

" Was that the preparation I heard you so earnestly recommend to the poor on your estate, as a substitute for bread, during the dearth of wheat ?" asked Mr. Morden.

" The same," replied Parkinson : " shell-ed barley boiled by itself, or with butter-milk, is, perhaps, one of the most nourishing aliments man can feed upon ; I had some prepared on my return, and gave a portion of it to all the poor round about me, explaining to them its good qualities, and the money it would save them : they, to be sure, took it, and did thank me, but some did not even eat the quantity I did give them, and not one ever did attempt to cook it for themselves : Now can this be any other than a spirit of obstinacy, and prejudice, when they will eagerly devour the ears of gleaned wheat boiled with milk, which hath exactly the same appearance, and is much inferior in flavour ?"

" Well, I am sure they deserve to starve," cried Mrs. Hutchinbunck.

" I am not their judge, though I cannot help



help being their adviser," returned Parkinson.

Mrs. Hutchinbunck paid Parkinson what she thought many flattering compliments on his fine feelings; and she was not wrong in her expression, for his feelings were too finely strung to be touched by her gross adulation.—However, there was some degree of information to be gathered from Mrs. Hutchinbunck's conversation when Holland was its topic, which Parkinson being pleased to attend to, and encourage her to proceed in, she made it her sole subject, till her husband gave the hint for departing, by rising, and exclaiming, "Well, well, Peggy, I can't so much blame you, for praising the bridge that carried you safe over; but we must be going, it's getting late, and you know the doctor said I must never be out after it is dark, though I don't think it much signifies what I do."

"I doubt not, indeed, love, but it is my duty to take what care of you I can while you do live;" and with this affectionate consolation

solation to the sick man, and the tender regard of muffling her silk pocket-handkerchief round his neck, she called Dicky out of the garden, and departed between her double charge.

CHAP.

## CHAP. IX.

*English Fashions.*

ON the following morning, at a little after seven, the chaise, which was to carry Mr. and Mrs. Hutchinbunck their first stage to Bristol, stopped at the parsonage to unload Dicky.

"Mind and be a good boy," said Mrs. Hutchinbunck, leaning out of the window after Dicky had alighted; "and get very clever against we come back: the gentleman will be very good to you—Won't you, sir?" turning to Mr. Morden, who stood by the side of the chaise.

"The young gentleman will be very happy, I dare say, in a little time, ma'am," returned the curate.

"You must think about us sometimes, d'ye hear?" said Mr. Hutchinbunck, popping out his nose under his wife's arm, as she leaned her hand upon the carriage door.

"Ay,

"Ay, and write us a letter now and then," said she.

"Yes, yes, don't let it be out of sight out of mind with you," added the father—"Good-bye."

"Good-bye," echoed the mother; "drive on, boy—Your servant, sir," to Mr. Morden; "Good-bye, Dicky;" and away they drove.

In a couple of minutes the chaise was hid by a turn of the road; and a shower which had been collecting in Dicky's eyes from the moment of his alighting from the chaise, in which his ardor to proceed, more than his grief at parting for the first time from his parents, had provoked, now trickled plentifully down his cheeks.

With encouraging words, to keep up his spirits, Mr. Morden led him into the parlour; where Eugene and John, who were just risen, were spinning their tops.—They both wished him good morning, but he only sobbed on, and did not regard them; which Mr. Morden seeing, told them not to speak to him any more till he became a little composed; and they accordingly pursued

rued their sport, leaving him standing crying by the window.

Presently Eugene's top incommoded the circle in which John's was spinning, and being the stronger overset it; John was of a hasty temper, and snatching up his top, wound the string round it, and dashed it with such violence on the floor, as to prevent the effect he wished to produce from taking place.

"Try again, a little harder, John," said Eugene, smiling.

Fired by his disappointment, and his brother's reproof, John threw down the string, and began to strike Eugene pretty soundly; at the sight of which, Dicky, whose passions were ripe for any impression, burst out into a sobbing laugh.

Eugene only defended himself, by catching hold of one of John's hands, and saying coolly, "John, John, don't be so passionate; don't do so."

"Why don't you fight him again?" said Dicky; "are you a coward?"

"I am sure I should be a coward, if I was

to strike a boy so much younger than myself," said Eugene.

"Then kick him, a little fool," said Dicky, tittering.

"How do you like that?" said John, flying up to him, and giving him a sample of the chastisement he had recommended him to undergo. Unaccustomed to contentions of this kind, Dicky twisted his fingers into the hair of his antagonist, and gave him a tug by his head, which brought him to the ground; then placing himself astride upon him, he began punching his fists into his sides with all his might.

"Holloa!" cried Eugene, running up, and laying hold of Dicky's arms, by which he strove to pull him up; "that's not fair play, let him get up."

"Why I pulled him down to beat him, because he beat you; you ought to be glad I beat him, he beat you for nothing."

"Yes," said Eugene, "but I'll see him fairly done by for all that;—get up, John, he shan't touch you."

"You are an ungrateful fool," said  
Dicky,

Dicky, "for not liking me for taking your part."

"No," said Eugene, "it was your own battle you were fighting, and not mine; you would not have touched him if he had not kicked you, and then you fell about him like a coward; however, perhaps it may be the way you have been used to fight in Holland."

"I never fought before," blubbered out Dicky.

"Did not you?" said Eugene, "then we'll teach you how you ought to go to work against another time;" at the same time doubling his fists, and placing himself opposite to Dicky in a boxing attitude.

"Don't, don't!" cried Dicky, running into a corner.

"Why, I ain't going to beat you," said Eugene, "only going to show you how to fight; however, we'll put it off till another time; let's shake hands and be friends for the present."

"But won't John bear malice to me," said Dicky, "and hit me some time when I don't see him coming?"

"I ain't

"I ain't such a shabby fellow," said John; "but if you affront me again, I'll lay about you, I promise you."

They then shook hands, and friendship incomprehensible to Dicky, as being the result of the most violent enmity, succeeded.

At the earnest recommendation of Mr. Morden, that Dicky's dress should be changed to the fashion of the country he was now in, his mother had consented to leave the alteration entirely to Mr. Morden's direction. Accordingly, as soon as the village tailor could accommodate him, his suit of yellow was exchanged for a blue jacket and trousers; his hair was untied behind, and combed out of powder; a round hat took place of the three-cornered one he had before worn; and his shoes were tied with a black ribband, instead of his foot being loaded with a heavy silver buckle.

His mind, also, underwent a considerable change, as well as his dress: he was not of a weak understanding, but he had been badly taught, or rather he had not been taught at all;—he certainly could read, but he spelt



every fourth word, made improper stops, and understood the meaning of few words beyond two syllables; he could write a little, but he had been suffered to scrawl at random upon paper, before he could make decent letters between lines.

His morals were much of the same stamp with his acquirements: he was not badly principled, but badly taught: he had learnt the commandments by rote, and had been taken to church twice every Sunday; but he had never been chastised for tattling to the discredit of his neighbours, or telling tales of the servants: he had been allowed to tease animals for his amusement, till he hardly recollected whether they had any feeling or not; and he had been suffered to tell white lies with impunity, on the usual promise of never doing so any more, till he often forgot to investigate the colour of a falsehood before he uttered it.

In a word, Dicky Hutchinbunck was a boy who, if he had not been a spoilt child, possessed abilities which, by proper management at an early age, might have raised him

him into eminence in manhood ; as it was, Mr. Morden entertained hopes that lenient correction, well-timed explanations, and good examples, would work no inconsiderable change on a disposition, which he believed, at the bottom, to be really sound,

## CHAP. X.

*Opinions of Life.*

A FEW months' time realized Mr. Morden's expectations: Dicky's foibles began to be corrected from the most favourable cause, namely, that of seeing, himself, they were blameable and improper.

To the Bible, Dilworth's spelling-book, and what are commonly called story-books, his studies had hitherto been confined: Lowth's grammar was the first variation put into his hands by Mr. Morden; he next read the English and Roman histories by Hume and Gibbon, and studied Lilly as an introduction to the Latin tongue; he next translated Knox's adverbs into that language; the reading of Eutropius, Cornelius Nepos, and Phædrus, followed shortly after, and an introduction to the Metamorphoses closed the first year; at the expiration of which he was sent for by his mother to pass the holidays, as she termed them, at Bristol.

Mr.

Mr. Hutchinbunck was somewhat mended, and the air was pronounced, by the faculty, to have been so beneficial to him, that he was recommended not to leave it, and had, accordingly, taken a house in the vicinity of the hot-wells.

Deficient as Mrs. Hutchinbunck was herself in learning, she was not so devoid of sense as not to perceive that her son was changed for the better, and accordingly determined to continue him at Mr. Morden's, though the distance was so great from her present habitation, and his visits attended with so numerous inconveniences, and large expences.

Against his succeeding visit, Dicky was become no mean proficient in the Latin tongue, and far from an inaccurate speaker of the English language : the studies of the year had been the conclusion of Ovid, Justin, Sallust, and Virgil; the Port-royal grammar had also been committed to his memory; he had occasionally been made to read Pope, Shakspeare, Goldsmith, Blair, and Paley; and the translation of the travels of Ana-

charms the younger had been peculiarly recommended to his attention.

Eugene had, during this time, been his fellow-student; and though his conceptions were stronger, and his genius more discerning, than those of his cotemporary, the latter made up the deficiency of nature in assiduity, and accurately retaining what he had once understood.

Thus proceeded their studies, in a regular train of advancement, without any material change of circumstances, till Eugene and his fellow-student had both attained their eighteenth year; Mr. and Mrs. Hutchinbunck still living in the vicinity of Bristol, and the poor gentleman in question alternately mending in health, and then again as suddenly relapsing.

Emily, now in her seventeenth year, was good-humoured and unaffected; this was all that could be said in her commendation: but her mind was not stored with qualifications, which could render the want of personal charms immaterial; indeed she had never possessed the ability of acquiring them.

Rachel,

Rachel, on the contrary, who in her infant years had promised little, began gradually to bloom into perfection like the modest rose-bud; and she with ease and pleasure retained the lessons of her preceptor; Mr. Morden disliked a female pedant more than he pitied an unlettered man. Thus the instructions he bestowed on his female students, were simply the use of their native tongue, the reading of its best authors, and the practice of moral duties.

John was climbing the steps by which Eugene and Richard had been ascending before him, but without the genius of the one, or the perseverance of the other, to assist him: John's disposition, as we have before said, was irritable; a temper which never dwells with pleasure on one subject.

The age at which Mr. Morden's sons were now arrived, made him judge it necessary to consult their inclinations concerning the line in which they should prefer moving through life, that the general knowledge they had acquired might be

turned into the proper channel to render them useful in such professions as they might select. Mr. Morden considered it a duty he owed them, to suffer that profession to be the one to which their own inclination led them ; but he considered it also as no less a part of his office to advise without restraining them, and to lay open to them the advantages and disadvantages which are connected with every mode of life, before they gave their final determination : he was fully competent to give them this explanation himself ; but he felt that he should be easier in the assisant arguments of a friend, and Jonathan Parkinson readily agreed to be present at the discussion in question.

Eugene, in preference to his age, was the first closeted with his father and Jonathan Parkinson ; and having been informed on what account he was called to them, was desired to give his sentiments freely.

“ Why,” answered Eugene, “ I always thought I should like to be a clergyman,  
till

till I heard my father say, the other day, that he hoped never to see any of his children in his profession."

"Did you see the motive of my wish?" asked Mr. Morden.

"No," replied Eugene; "I could not imagine why you should object to my following a plan of life, in which you seemed happy yourself."

"I cannot be unhappy in a situation," returned Mr. Morden, "to which I voluntarily reduced myself, by an act which leaves me so blest a reflection as the one I enjoy from it."

Eugene was unacquainted with his father's former life, and Parkinson explained it to him.

"You see, my son," continued the curate, when his friend had ceased speaking, "how slender are my worldly possessions—how very little it will ever be in my power to give you: however, what I should have left you at my death shall, if you wish it, be expended on your college education; but then it is unnecessary to add, that I



cannot do more towards placing you in any situation in the church ; how difficult curacies are to be obtained, and how slender a maintenance when acquired : you may hereafter, and probably will, wish to marry ; you must then expect children : how will your finances and necessary expences agree ?”

“ I should have hoped,” answered Eugene, “ by my assiduities, to ingratiate myself with the lord of the diocese in which I might be placed.”

“ Oh, my boy !” interrupted Mr. Morden, “ preferment awarded to merit is so rare in any situation of life ! so very rare in the church !—However, weigh these considerations well in your own mind, and draw out your unbiassed opinion.”

“ No, sir,” answered Eugene, “ I entirely abandon the idea ; you can have no motive but my good in the advice you give me : experience has made you the fitter judge, and I beg leave to make your opinion my own.”

Mr. Morden blew his nose, and wiped his eyes.

“ Thou

"Thou art a worthy boy," said Parkinson; "thou wilt be a good man."

"I hope you will never repent your obedience, Eugene; I have your good at heart, indeed I have," said Mr. Morden.

"Dear sir, no more of this, I entreat you; I have already forgotten I ever entertained the wish; besides, since the observation I heard you make the other day, my thoughts have been busy on another plan."

"What is it?"

"That of learning the farming business," said Eugene.

"Then do thou set thy heart at rest," said Parkinson, "I will teach it thee; I do approve thy choice; thou hast an honest heart, and shouldst be a farmer; thou wilt not distress the poor; thou art too nobly minded to be singly rich, on what is pinched from the stomachs of the many hungry. I will teach thee what thou requirest to know; thou wilt be a good farmer." Parkinson rose in an ecstasy, and shook Eugene firmly by the hand; and his whole appear-

ance was that of a man who had just received the grant of a request he had been fearfully urging, instead of the kind conferrer of a material benefit.

Eugene was all joy and thanks.

Mr. Morden silent, but expressive of gratitude.

## CHAP. XI.

*More and different Opinions on the last Subject.*

AFTER a few moments pause which had been given to the feelings of the benefactor and of the father, John was ordered to come in.

John scarcely waited for the conclusion of his father's explanatory address to exclaim, "Oh, I'll go into the army!"

Parkinson shook his head.—"What, hire thyself to become a legal murderer? Fye, fye!"

"Why," said John, "if we all thought as you do, we should soon have an enemy here."

"When an enemy doth attempt to invade our country," replied Parkinson, "each will naturally act in his own defence."

"Ay, but if we don't know how to go about it," said John.

"When nature doth call upon us to use violence

violence for the defence of our persons, instinct doth point out the mode of exerting ourselves."

John sneered, and muttered out, "Old quakers' talking!" The sentence, fortunately for him, was not heard either by his father or Parkinson.

"The plan you have mentioned, John, as your choice, is one I am far from approving, any more than Jonathan Parkinson does: there are many dissipations to which that line of life unavoidably leads, which I will not call by the harsh name of vices, but with which I had rather a son of mine should not be acquainted.

"Other people have their faults too, as well as officers," said John.

"If I could not attain entire rectitude of conduct," said Parkinson, "I should prefer being guilty of a fault in which I were single, than by my actions to confess I had been too weak in my nature to correct in myself a fault which I had perceived another to possess."

"Is there no other avocation which might

might equally meet your approbation, on due consideration, and make us all happy in your choice?" asked the father.

"I won't be a parson, I'm sure," exclaimed John. As he uttered the sentence, his eye met Jonathan Parkinson's sternly fixed upon him; he reddened, and as he plainly read in Parkinson's eyes, "is not your father a clergyman?" he added, in a softened tone, "that is, I don't think I could preach."—These were bad omens in a growing disposition to the reflection of Parkinson; he sighed, and, raising his foot on his heel, struck it two or three times sharply on the ground.

"The church is as contrary to my wish as the army," said Mr. Morden.

"I should not much mind being a lawyer," fulked out John, "if I thought I could ever get to be a counsellor."

A silence on all sides ensued.

"I'm sure they are useful, if soldiers ain't," said John.

"The dissatisfied tempers of the world do give them employment, I grant," answered

swered Parkinson; "and there have been, and are, many honest men in the profession; but there are so many temptations to render its practisers otherwise, that, if my sentiments be asked, I must reply, that I will not be instrumental in placing any one in a situation wherein he may be deluded into error."

"Your opinion meets mine," returned Mr. Morden.

"Then, I suppose, I must sell plums, or be a barber," said John; "for every creditable trade is refused me."—John began to bite his lips, and his eye-balls were glazed with the tears that were collected round them.

"Your expression is harsh, John," returned Mr. Morden: "every shop-keeper, or mechanic, derives as much credit and respectability from his station, if he does not disgrace it by any dishonest action, as those men who follow the professions that you so highly extol.—Our ideas of life," continued he, "ought not to injure the community in which we live."

"I am

"I am a friend to no profession," said Parkinson, "which can primitively or secondarily be injurious to any member of the world: the soldier, though he doth kill the enemy of his country, is nevertheless the slayer of a fellow-creature, the committer of murder.—The lawyer doth defend a cause, because he receiveth his brief for it, when he often doth know his client to be in the wrong.—God grant, for the sake of those who do pursue these avocations, that their evil necessity be not unpardonable!—But how far preferable is it, with a free choice given us, to select a business to which we are assured no wrong attaches itself!—What a satisfaction is it to the heart of man when he doth reflect on a dubious point, and doth fear that he may be doing wrong in the prosecution of an action which he is half inclined to commit, but is certain that he cannot be [doing wrong to omit it, and hath sufficient fortitude of mind to suffer the certainty to triumph over the delusive doubt!"]

"Paley," said Mr. Morden, "in his  
Moral



Moral Philosophy, you will recollect, exemplifies the mode of conduct here advised by my friend."

" Yes," answered John ; but his manner was not expressive of prompt recollection.

" A surgeon," said Parkinson, " is a profession which, in the hands of a careful man, can be productive of good alone to society."

" I should have rest neither night nor day, if I was an apothecary," said John.

" Thou hast thy way to work through the world, boy, and must not grudge labour ; a sluggard cannot come to excellency."

" I should not mind working as hard as any body, if I might choose my labour."

" But thy choice is improper, and must be guided by those whom experience, and a proper knowledge of things, have rendered able to direct thee."

Where the spirit of temper was free and generous, Parkinson met it with determined friendship ; where perverse and contracted, he considered it as his duty to speak what truth dictated to his tongue with a spirit of authority :—this was the bent of the last sentence

sentence he uttered ; John felt its force, and knowing how implicitly his father followed Parkinson's advice, and the unequal combat his arguments, founded only in a liking he could not well explain, could sustain against those of Parkinson, backed by a sound and experienced knowledge, he gave up the contest, and, with a sullen and sneering countenance, received the information that he would, in a few days, be bound apprentice to Mr. Cranberry, the acting surgeon and apothecary of the village.

## CHAP. XII.

*A Gentleman of the Faculty, and a Stranger.*

ABOUT the centre of the straggling houses which composed Hilden village, and where the thickest knot of dwellings stood collected, a small neat house of two stories high informed the passengers, by means of a black and gilt lettered board, that it contained an omniscient in the arts of physic and surgery; not forgetting to mention, that the artist could produce members into the world with as great skill as he could drive them out of it: this mass of perfection was known, in the village and neighbourhood, by the concise title of Ned Cranberry.

Ned Cranberry was a man of fashion in language equally as in dress. His figure was tall and slender, his face designed by nature to be pleasing, by its possessor to be enchanting, and thus robbed by himself of  
the

the grace it naturally possessed ; a pair of whiskers, which almost touched his lips, clotted with pomatum, and filled with powder, nearly hid his cheeks ; an enormous cravat conferred the same office on his chin ; and a flouched hat, intended to look dashing, was equally kind to his eyes.

His constant dress was a frock-coat, powdered behind almost to the skirts, a striped waistcoat, which descended nearly half way down his thighs, to which, the addition of buckskin breeches, boots, and patent spurs, which were always worn by him in readiness to attend a call at a distance that required the exertions of his rosinante as well as himself, gave him the air of a post-boy in an inn-yard, who claims the next fare.

Here then it was that the valiant-minded John, at sixteen years and a half old, was placed, and destined to pass the seven successive years of his life in the handling of pestles, pill-boxes, phials, and gallipots.

When Eugene was first taken under the care and instruction of Jonathan Parkinson, and John's present situation with Ned Cranberry

Cranberry had been bargained for by his father, the latter had judged it expedient to request Mrs. Hutchinbunck to make the same inquiry of her son which he had made of his, and accordingly wrote to her a letter on the subject. She answered it immediately, with acknowledgments for his past attentions to her son, and for his present consideration; but said, "that she intended Richard should live on his means." Mr. Morden ventured to write to her a second letter, expressing, in gentle terms, his disapprobation of committing young minds to idleness. Mrs. Hutchinbunck replied to him, without being offended at his free admonition, but persisted in her intention of indulging him with a pleasant life, as she could afford it.

Mr. Morden had done his duty with regard both to the son and mother; he was sorry his advice had succeeded no better, but he nevertheless was happy he had given it.

Eugene and John had now left the parsonage nearly a year; Dicky Hutchinbunck was still under the tuition of the

curate, and profiting by the lessons he received : he was nevertheless become a pedant, and very opiated, but never ventured to contest with Mr. Morden. Emily was much as she always had been, pleasing, without great beauty, or much knowledge; grieved at the loss of her brothers, though they were still both in the same village, and she constantly saw them; wanting their society from habit, and without sufficient fortitude of mind, not to be continually mourning its loss.

Rachel regretted the loss of her companions, but she made their absence a greater source of pleasure when they met, and was always happy from the surest source of tranquillity of mind, the preference of others' happiness, and welfare to her own.

It was one day about this time, that Tom Smith's wife entered the parsonage kitchen, and requested Susan to inform her master, that she would be glad to speak to him. The message was delivered; a request that she would step into the parlour was its answer.

With

With a curtsey down to the ground Mrs. Smith advanced, and after many apologies for troubling his goodness, she took from a piece of brown paper, in which it had been carefully wrapped up, a letter with the seal, which was black, broken, and putting it into the curate's hands, informed him that it came from a lady with whom she had once lived; and as neither she nor her husband were good hands, as she expressed herself, at making out gentle-folk's writing, she would be obliged to him to read it to her, as her own efforts for that purpose had not succeeded.

The letter ran as follows :

“ Mrs. Smith,

“ You have, doubtless, heard of the death of my husband, Captain Eringham; I am just returned to England with my dear boy Alfred, and despairing of meeting with a friendly reception from any of the branches either of my own or husband's family, a place of pleasant retirement is my only wish: if, therefore, you can procure me a neat dwelling in the village where you live, I will

will send down what furniture I want from this city : an answer from you as soon as you can determine the point in question, will much oblige,

“ Your’s,

“ *Adelphi Hotel,*      “ Sophia Eringham.”  
*London.*”

“ I thought it meant that,” exclaimed Mrs. Smith at the conclusion of the letter ; “ but I could hardly believe that Miss Sophia, that was, wanted to come to live in our village.—And the Captain dead too !—Lord help us, what an uncertain world we live in !”

“ Who is the lady ?—when did you know her, Mrs. Smith ?” inquired the curate.

“ Why, sir, I’ll tell you her whole story if you give me time to think a minute,” replied Mrs. Smith ; but as her minute of recollection was probably longer than our readers may have estimated it, and her narrative more prolix than they would conceive necessary to be related when she once began her detail, we will give them a concise sketch of Mrs. Eringham’s story in our own words.



## CHAP. XIII.

*A Father of too common a Kind.*

GENERAL Danby, in his own opinion, was a greater, and consequently had a right to be a more determined man than the father of the Horatii—The Roman had lost only two of his sons in the service of their country—General Danby had lost his three sons ; and he had done still more, he had been victorious in two duels. After the death of his sons, one only daughter, Sophia, now Mrs. Eringham, remained to him, and her he resolved to match with one of the first men in the kingdom—an union which he vainly imagined the merit of her family could not fail to procure for her.

One of General Danby's aid-de-camps, a Captain Eringham, was the orphan of the general's sister: he had taken him under his protection ; and an implicit obedience to his uncle's nod was to be his road to promotion

promotion in the army.—This young man had early in life conceived an attachment for the general's daughter, and she looked upon him with no less affection than he felt for her ; but the determined sternness of the general's temper, and their knowledge of the exalted marriage to which he was looking forward for his daughter, awed them both into a concealment of their sentiments from the world, and much more so from the object of their terror.

Heated by continual intercourse with the object beloved, Captain Eringham's passion grew too strong to be concealed in his breast without ill effects to his health, and a violent fever seized him.

It happened during the first days of his illness that General Danby was called to the command of a district at a considerable distance from his own home; and Eringham, being too ill to attend him, was left to be nursed at his house.

This was a fatal period to Sophia and Eringham : she had already confessed she

pitied, the next step was to heal ; and she clandestinely gave him her hand.

Mrs. Smith, at this time unmarried, lived in the general's service ; and her brother, Jacob Lamb, who had been reared by Captain Eringham's father from a parish-boy, was the captain's faithful servant ; and by their assistance, and the aid of the curate of a neighbouring village, the ceremony was privately performed.

In a couple of months Eringham joined his uncle comparatively happy, for it was now beyond the power of fate to separate him from his Sophia ; and, false hope ! delusive expectation ! he believed their union might be kept a secret from the general. But, alas ! a few months rendered the imagination false ; Sophia was pregnant. What steps were now to be taken ? Eringham durst not counsel, Sophia durst not act ; each feared the ill result of what each might either say or perform to soften their father.

Unexpectedly the general, wishing to visit his seat, obtained leave of absence from

from the troops he commanded ; and one evening told Eringham to be ready to attend him home the following day. Eringham trembled not less for himself than his wife, as he had now no opportunity of apprising her of her father's arrival ; and the discovery must be made abruptly to him, either by his confession, or by the direction of chance. The latter seemed the better mode, because it was the more distant ; and he resolved to trust to it.

The first sound which saluted the general on his entering his home, was the cry of the child of which Mrs. Eringham had been delivered the day before. " What child is that?—where is my daughter?" were uttered in the same breath. Jacob Lamb had been absent with his master, his sister had met him at the door, and her countenance verified Captain Eringham's fears ; he fell on his knees before the general, confessed, and implored pardon. Ungovernable rage for a few moments choked the general's utterance ; it at length burst forth in accents of horror : " Curses on you both ! leave my  
F 3 house

house this instant, and take your baggage and brat along with you ; for, by G—d, I'll never see either of you again !" He entered his apartment, and locked the door.

The mandate so sternly uttered, Captain Eringham vainly hoped might be softened as the first heat of passion subsided ; but the general refused to recant a letter of his oath, and Mrs. Eringham was removed the same evening from her own father's house at the hazard of her life.

Nor did the general's cruelty end here : of the commission which he had procured Eringham, he found means to deprive him ; but he was nevertheless not a skilful tormentor, for he left them one consolation dearer than all the comforts of which he had spoiled them, and of which kinder treatment had bereft them, and thus given them a more keen punishment :—he acted only against the body, he left the heart unaffailed. When the heat of love began to abate in Eringham and his Sophia, the crime of disobedience against a parent first touched their hearts ; with minds thus softened,

ened, mild remonstrances and a timely forgiveness on the part of that parent had won him the reverence, the duty, the souls of his children, and converted his imaginary loss into a real gain; but when that parent cast off his children for the commission of an act to which the laws of nature inspired them, he lightened their hearts of the only sin which had ever burthened it, by teaching them that they had not disobeyed a *father*.

From the small sum of money which Mr. Eringham and his wife could now together raise, they could scarcely insure themselves a month's maintenance: the faithful, the worthy Jacob Lamb stepped in to their assistance; with the money he had hoarded from many years of service, he bought his master an ensigncy in a regiment on the point of embarking for America: Eringham received the gift bestowed on him by the offspring of his father's bounty with tears. "How shall I ever repay you, Jacob?" he exclaimed. "Let me but jog through the world by your side," he returned, "and I am sufficiently re-

"warded." Mrs. Eringham kissed Jacob's hand; "I have not lost a father, but found one!" she said.

In a few days the ships destined to carry over the troops received orders for sailing; and Mrs. Eringham, her little son Alfred, and Jacob, took their passage on board the same ship in which Mr. Eringham's regiment sailed.

On board the vessel, Mr. Eringham contracted a friendship with a brother officer, which proved to him a circumstance of a not less pleasurable than beneficial nature; for, dying about seven years after their arrival in America, and moved by Eringham's story, he left him and his son for their lives an annuity of three hundred pounds.

When Alfred had attained his sixteenth year, his father fell a martyr to the yellow fever in the West-Indies. Then was Jacob Lamb again the supporter of his master in the persons of his widow and son, and by his advice they returned to England, and sought an asylum in the village where his sister, Mrs. Smith, had settled herself.

The

The general, Mrs. Eringham had learnt on her arrival in London, was still alive; she accordingly addressed him by letter, thinking, now the principal object of his rancour was no more, he might perhaps be inclined to regard her: but it was returned unopened.

She accordingly next addressed the epistle to Mrs. Smith, of which she now waited the answer.



## CHAP. XIV.

*How to be happy.*

**M**RS. Smith having finished her narrative, Mr. Morden inquired at what time she had lived with Mrs. Eringham. "I never lived exactly what I may call with her, fir," she replied; "I was house-maid at the general's when she married the captain *clandestinely*, and I married Tom Smith from there about a year after she went to Meriky."

"By what means, then, Mrs. Smith, does the lady know that you have since that time changed your name and place of residence?"

"Why, fir, Tom Smith sometimes gets one or another to write him a letter to my brother."

"Your brother?"

"Yes, fir; why, did I not tell you, fir, that my brother, Jacob Lamb, lived servant with the captain when he married Miss Sophia,

Sophia, and that he took him over servant with him to Meriky ?”

“ Then, he is still with Mrs. Eringham, I suppose ?”

“ For any thing I can tell, sir, he is.”

“ Well, Mrs. Smith, I think the house lately built on the road side by Jonathan Parkinson, would exactly suit the lady’s intended plan, and that I had better speak to my friend about it directly.”

“ You know best, sir, whether it would be good enough.”

Mr. Morden perceived that the subject that they were discussing would be an endless subject for Mrs. Smith’s volubility of tongue; and having obtained the necessary information, he gave her a gentle hint to depart, by rising, and repeating that he would go immediately and speak to his friend Parkinson on the subject, and write himself the desired answer to the lady.

Mr. Morden found Jonathan Parkinson in his hay-field, and immediately explained to him the cause of his visit. The house in question had been vacant nearly half a year;

its late possessor, a maiden lady of good fortune, having been dead about that time ; and as no person had since applied to rent it, Mrs. Eringham was readily declared its tenant. " Forty pounds a year is the rent, I think ?" said Mr. Morden.—" No, twenty," answered Parkinson, and was walking away.—" I thought Mrs. Brown had paid you forty ?" said Mr. Morden, following him a step or two.—" Thou art right," replied Parkinson, stopping, and turning round his head. " Hannah Brown was a maiden of good property ; this is an unfortunate widow with a son."

Parkinson's actions were always too nobly intended to be pleased with commendation, and he moved quickly forward to prevent the curate's reply.

Morden understood his friend's manner too well to hazard a word in answer. " How easily might the rich be happy !" hung on his tongue ; he returned it with a sigh into his heart.

As he walked homewards, he pursued the train of reflection into which this additional

tional instance of Parkinson's benevolence had led him. "How easily might the rich be happy!" he repeated: "yet with what labours do too many of the great render their existence barely endurable; the ploughman does not toil so hard for his daily bread, as the rich man does for pleasure!—Strange, that those who possess the means, should be so ignorant of the mode, by which the end desired may be obtained!—It cannot be that nature has formed their hearts less susceptible of true delight, than those beneath them!—Are they in sorrow, is not consolation equally dear to them?—Are they in pain, is not alleviation equally grateful as to the poor man?—How unaccountable, then, that man should not perceive how infinitely happier the dispensation of comfort to the needy must render him, than even its administration to himself can make him!—Is there a joy amongst the luxuries which studied pleasure gives, so great, so lasting, so permanent, as the praise of gratitude?"

Arrived at the extremity of the lane which ran by the side of the hay-field, Parkinson

was

was looking over the hedge. The curate saw him not, till he called to him: "Charles Morden, I do charge thee not to mention that my rent was ever more than twenty pounds;—dost thou hear me, Charles?"

"I do," answered Morden.

"Good-morning, then," exclaimed Parkinson quickly; and, descending from the bank on which he had climbed to look over into the road, disappeared, and thus prevented Morden's reply.—Again Morden had only that eternal colloquist, the mind, to converse with. "How different," he went on, "are thy charities from those of the world! given in the true spirit of humanity, not from vain ostentation and fame;—not because thy name will be read on a subscription list, and thy large donation extolled, or because thou hopest a monument to be raised to thy charitable memory!—thou givest because the objects of thy pity are in need,—because thou *thyself* art in need—*of Heaven!*"

As Mr. Morden had taken upon him to become Mrs. Smith's substitute in her  
correspond-

correspondence, (a circumstance for which Mrs. Eringham, in a subsequent letter to the curate, expressed herself not less pleased than grateful;) Mr. Morden considered himself bound to act still further in junction with Mrs. Smith, and be with her at the appointed house, to receive the lady at the time of her arrival.

When the chaise stopped, Mrs. Eringham and her son, in deep mourning, alighted from it;—Jacob Lamb, also in mourning, followed on horseback.

Mrs. Eringham was in her thirty-eighth year; her countenance was interesting without being remarkably handsome, her aspect was pale, her eyes mild but penetrating, her contour of features most expressive of resigned sorrow; she was tall, slender, and well formed; her understanding was naturally good, and had been well cultivated; she had seen the polite manners of life in its most refined circles, and adopted them without affectation, or the appearance of imitation.

Her son had just attained the age of eighteen; he strongly resembled his mother in  
person,

person, but he was more strikingly handsome, and more robust, though not so tall in proportion for his sex ; he resembled her also in a more material part—the good qualities of her mind.

Jacob Lamb had nearly attained his sixtieth year ; his figure was short and thin, but firmly set ; his countenance was venerable, for his grey hairs claimed him respect : he was confidential, honest, sincere, religious.—He had served Captain Eringham's father till his death ; his service had been next devoted to his son ; gratitude and compassion now bound him the protector of his son and widow : he was the offspring of a tenant of Captain Eringham's father, and had been reared by him from his orphan childhood.—Then were sown in his breast the seeds of gratitude. On the decease of Mr. Eringham, Jacob, unaccustomed to apply for new masters, was rescued from a task he most disliked by the friendship of his son : here his gratitude strengthened into affection for his master's child.—The captain died.—Two generations had protected him—had reared

reared him from an orphan ; such was now the grandson of his first beloved master, the son of his second.—Jacob wept.—Gratitude and affection combined, drew forth the noblest sentiment of the human heart—compassion. “ I’ll be damned,” cried he, “ if I leave the poor boy, while he can afford to keep me, or I can manage to keep him.” On dismounting his horse, Jacob moved up to Mrs. Eringham and Alfred before he noticed his sister : bowing to the former, and taking the latter by the hand, he said, “ God bless you both, and send you happier here, than it pleased him to make you where you come from !”

Mrs. Eringham signalled him thanks for his wish with her hand, and, stifling her tears, followed Mr. Morden into the house. “ Thank you, thank you, good Jacob,” cried Alfred, and ran in after her.

Jacob was blunt ; his heart was such that he had a prerogative to express its feelings as best suited his tongue ; he was a rare example of the servants of old days, long gone by, “ who sweat for duty, not for meed.”

CHAP.



## CHAP. XV.

*Mystery!!!*

MRS. Eringham, on being alone with the curate, verbally expressed to him her thankfulness for the interest he had taken in her wish, on seeing the letter which she had written to Mrs. Smith ; and added that his acquaintance and friendship, if he would indulge her with their continuance, would be her sole enjoyment and solace in her present situation.

The slightest hint, how he might confer a kindness, was at all times sufficient to Mr. Morden ; and having promised to introduce his young family to her on the following morning, a promise which Mrs. Eringham and her son declared, and truly, strangers as they were in their present habitation, they warmly anticipated, he departed ; mutual pleasure being the result of their introduction.

Having

Having seen the baggage safely bestowed, and charged the female servant, whom his sister had hired for Mrs. Eringham, not to leave the house till his return, Jacob Lamb accompanied Mrs. Smith to her dwelling on a visit to Tom, who was confined with a hurt he had received in his foot by treading on a nail.

Scarcely were the how-do-you-does and shakes by the hand, with a few welcomes home, and well met at last, over a jug of Tom's ale, concluded, when in came Doctor Cranberry, as the village politely styled him; to administer to Tom's foot.

"Well, how are you?" exclaimed the familiar Mr. Cranberry, seating himself upon the table, and whipping his boot.

"Why," replied Tom, grinning, "that's what you ought to tell me, axing your pardon, as you're the doctor."

"Devilish good! Tom; devilish fair, upon my soul!—you are a wag." Ned yawned.

"Why, upon the whole, then," said Tom, putting on a grave face, now speaking seriously

nously of his wound, "I think it is a little easier to day."

"That's right," said the son of Galen.—

"How's your ale?"

"Get a drop of fresh directly, Nan," said Tom, emptying the pot to make room for the successive draught.

While the jug was at her husband's lips, "This is my brother, fir, just come from Meriky," said Mrs. Smith, addressing the doctor.

"Ay, well, and what's the best news there?"

"That's according to whom it relates," said Jacob drily, who had instantly read Cranberry's frivolous character, and had been as instantly disgusted with it.

It was a maxim with Cranberry, and in this case he most evidently deserved credit if he never merited it in any other, never to hear a sentence which did not sound exactly as he could wish it; so taking the jug from Mrs. Smith's hands he exclaimed, "Come, here's all our good healths!"

"That's

"That's rather against self, ain't it, pray, fir, axing pardon?" said Tom.

"Why, Tom!" cried Mrs. Smith, in an under voice, casting a look of reproof at her husband.

"And so you have been in America, have you, Mr. ——?" said the doctor, as he concluded his draught.

"Lamb, my brother's name is, fir," added Mrs. Smith, concluding Cranberry's unfinished sentence.

"As my filter told you, fir," said Jacob.

"Well, and what sort of a place is it—much like England here, or—ch? Come, tell us."

"Much like all other places in one respect, I believe," answered Jacob; "pleasant, or disagreeable, according to the disposition of them that live in it."

"Devilish good!—devilish fair, upon my soul!" cried Cranberry. "What a fine easy temper your's is, Mr. ——! Why, according to your own account, you could be as happy freezing in Greenland, or broiling in the desarts, as you are here."

"Why,

"Why, as to that," returned Jacob, "I never tried either, and so I can't say; but I have always been a working man all my life long; and while I attended to my business, I had not much time to do any thing else; one thing is as much as any man can do properly."

Jacob's conversation was not any more suited to Cranberry's taste, than Cranberry's manner was to Jacob's discernment; and jumping from the table, he ran to the window, exclaiming, "Upon my soul! I believe it will rain."

Mrs. Smith walked to the door, which was open; and as she arrived at it, Emily Morden and Rachel passed by.

"How do you do, ladies?" on the part of Mrs. Smith, was civilly answered by them, and they passed on.

"That girl grows devilish handsome," said Cranberry.

"What, Miss Morden?" answered Mrs. Smith—"yes, sir."

"No! no! no! t'other girl, her may-day friend," he replied; "her the old quaker

found at the fair, and brought to the parsonage; folks say he has behaved to her ever since as if she had been his own."

"Ay!" answered Mrs. Smith; "Mr. Parkinson's a good man."

"Who?" exclaimed Jacob, and, starting from his seat, joined his sister and the doctor.

"Why, Parkinson, as he is called;—the quaker-like gentleman that lives up yonder at the great house, and does so much good to the poor."

"Ay, a devilish fine fellow," cried Ned, "in the way of charity, and such things, upon my soul!—Well, good-by, Tom, mind and take care of yourself, and you'll do—that's my hero!" and away he ran, beating every bush and nettle his whip could reach.

"What a funny gentleman that is!" said Mrs. Smith, looking out after Cranberry. Jacob's eyes were fixed on the floor—"What is his christian name!" said he, without raising them.

"Edward, brother."

"Are you sure of it?" He lifted his  
eyes

eyes from the ground, and resumed his seat.

"Why, brother, as if I could miss of a gentleman's name, that has lived these four years within stone's throw of my cottage—why, if you look but out, you may almost see the name over the door, if it is not too dark."

"Whose door?"

"Why Doctor Cranberry's, to be sure."

"Rot the powdered ape!"

"Lord, brother, you are as frumpish as ever."

"Parkinson's name," I asked you.

"Why, then you should have *explicated* yourself at first, and I would have answered you," said she; "they call him Jonathan."

"Come, come," called out Tom, "fetch us another drop of ale, and have done with your bickering; you never could agree as long as I have known you; I thought, however, you would have held out the first night in seventeen years you came together."

Mrs. Smith summoned up a laugh, and went for the ale—Jacob smoothed his brow, which had apparently been ruffled by an inward reflection, and made amends to his sister for his

sharp

sharp words, by indulging her in the use of her favourite weapon, her tongue, in recounting to him the adventure of Rachel's being found by Parkinson.

During the recital, Jacob asked so many repetitions of different sentences, and interposed so many questions, whose determinations appeared to Mrs. Smith of non-importance, that, at the conclusion of her story, she exclaimed with a laugh, "Well, brother, I'm sure I did not think I knew any tale that could have diverted a person, like you, that had travelled so far."

"Why, as to that," answered Jacob, "no one has travelled so far but he could like to know a little more;" and smiled in his turn.

"Why, now, that's just my case," said Tom Smith; "for though I have been twice in my time to London, I am all longing to hear you talk about foreign parts."

"Ay, come, do tell us a little about Mc-riky," added Mrs. Smith.

Jacob consented; and having given them a short description of such matters as had excited his own admiration, he returned



home, leaving Tom Smith fast asleep in his elbow-chair, and his sister the proudest woman in the village ; for her brother had been to Meriky, and she herself had heard all about foreign parts.

## CHAP. XVI.

*Hasty Inspirations of Love and Friendship.*

THE following morning introduced the curate and his family to Mrs. Eringham; she was recovered from the fatigue of travelling, and the faint tint of vermilion which streaked her pale cheeks made her countenance more interesting.

Eugene apologized for Jonathan Parkinson not having visited his fair tenant, by explaining that some affairs, relative to a distant branch of his family, had called him to the north, and that he had set out the day before, and would not return in some weeks.

The company had some minutes taken their seats, and were discussing general topics of discourse, when Mrs. Eringham, happening to turn her head towards the door, perceived Jacob standing with his hand on the lock, and his eyes fixed on the window, upon which sat Rachel. "You

need not wait, Jacob." Jacob heard her not. "You need not wait, Jacob," was repeated : —Still Jacob was deaf.—Emily began to titter.—Alfred went up to Jacob, and he left the apartment.—"Dear me, how deaf that poor old man is!" said Emily.—"Oh no, you are mistaken," said Mrs. Eringham.—"Really! well I thought he had, I am sure," replied Emily.—"He has been long in the family, and is allowed privileges beyond a common servant," returned Mrs. Eringham, surprised at Jacob's conduct, and at a loss how to apologize for it.

The curate now addressed Mrs. Eringham, and the subject dropped.

In a few minutes Emily renewed it. "Dear me, there's the old man again."

Jacob was leaning upon some white pales which divided the house from the road; not to have an opportunity of beholding what passed, but with his back turned to the highway, and his sight directed to the window.

Presently after the family from the parsonage departed, and Mrs. Eringham was requested, by its possessor, to make it her second

cond home, whenever change of scene or society were pleasant to her.

Jacob had, during the illness and after the death of Captain Eringham, been the friend rather than the servant of his wife ; and Mrs. Eringham had long been in the habit of conversing familiarly with him, at the times his avocations called him into her apartment. When he entered the parlour to prepare for dinner, " You were very much struck with my visitors to-day, Jacob," said Mrs. Eringham. " I don't know, ma'am," answered Jacob, rather confused ; " I thought that young lady a very nice looking person."

" You shew your taste, Jacob," said Alfred, " she is one of the prettiest girls I ever saw ; what beautiful auburn hair she has !"

" I mean her with the brown, master Alfred," said Jacob.

" She is not Mr. Morden's daughter," said Mrs. Eringham."

" No, I'd lay a good sum of that, if I had it," returned Jacob.

" Why, Jacob ?" asked Alfred.

"Because, in my eye, she's not like the family; as handsome again as any of them."

Jacob left the room to fetch in some additional articles for spreading the table.

"How blind and insensible old men are to beauty," cried Alfred, "not to prefer that lovely Emily, with her laughing eyes, to the other demure girl!"

"In my opinion she is an equally fine girl," replied Mrs. Eringham.

"Your sex does not allow you to be a judge of female beauty," said Alfred; "their persons won't bear comparison; then how lively is Emily, how pleasantly she chatted, while Rachel sat as silent as a statue."

"We are not to argue from that, that she wants sense," returned Mrs. Eringham—"silence is commendable in young persons of her age, when not addressed."

"But I spoke to her," replied Alfred.

"And did she not answer you?"

"Yes, she answered with politeness, but with so distant a manner to what the gay Emily did—I like a girl that can talk."

"At this moment Jacob entered; he had caught

caught Alfred's last sentence, and answered to it—"Well, if I was young again, I should not wish a young lady with such a pair of eyes in her head as Miss Rachel, I think they call her, has, to do more than look at me."

"They are both very fine girls," said Mrs. Eringham, "and I am happy in the knowledge of so pleasant a family."

"Ay, but Emily's the girl for me, for all that," said Alfred; and here ended the dispute. Jacob's opinion was not to be moved, so he wisely remained silent, and Alfred gave up his harangue to eat his dinner.

In the evening a loud knock announced visitors; Mr. Cranberry and John were announced.—Mrs. Eringham rose at their entrance; John introduced his master.—"I beg my presence may not prove an interruption; can't stay an instant if you move," simpered out Cranberry.—Mrs. Eringham courtesied, and seated herself.—Cranberry and John followed her example. Cranberry went on—"Could not deny myself the earliest opportunity of expressing how happy

I found myself, in the addition you have condescended to make to our small society." The predetermined speech was spoken; Mrs. Eringham had bowed in return; and the doctor's wit began to work for another topic equally pleasing and striking.

After two or three heins to clear the way, and show off a tolerably white hand, which was meanwhile placed before his mouth, "Have you seen the quaker, ma'am?"—"My landlord, fir?"—"Yes, ma'am; Jonathan Parkinson. Oh, true, I had forgot though, he is not in the village at present. I dare say you'll like him; a monstrous good kind of man in his way."—"I have understood so, fir."

He next turned to Alfred.

"Do you ride, fir?"

"I have no horse, fir."

"One of mine is at your service, fir, any day you please—flatter myself I can show you a pleasant ride or two—If Mrs. Eringham will accept a place in my gig, shall esteem myself superlatively happy."

"You are very polite, fir."

"Quite

"Quite safe, ma'am, upon my soul; I drive blood, but as gentle as lambs, would not snap a silk cord."

"I thank you, sir, but riding in open carriages is an amusement I am not at all fond of."

"Well, sir," turning to Alfred, "I hope you'll not forget. I am to show you the country—will you take a peep at my stable, now?—only at the turn of the lane."

Alfred's hours were solitary at home; and, eager to gain a new acquaintance, he acquiesced, and they set off.

Alfred's disposition was free from vice, but it was not equally so from foibles; he loved society; he would be in the midst of a crowd, if there was a possible means of insinuating himself into it;—whoever was smart and good humoured, won his heart: no wonder then that Cranberry, who was really no unpleasant companion when he strove to make himself agreeable, and whose person was the emblem of fashion, captivated one thus disposed, and whose notice

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he considered so much the more honorary, as he was some years his superior in age.

Cranberry, on the other hand, had few opportunities of showing off his consequence, which lay in his gig, horses, cropt hair, and cant expressions, to those who understood their worth, and to still fewer, who valued the owner upon them when they did; thus the acquisition of an acquaintance, like Alfred, whom he hoped would admire his taste, and follow his plans, leaving him still the principal, was an equal source of pleasure to him.

The event turned out as desired by both parties, they each immediately became what the other wished.

## CHAP. XVII.

*A Baronet and his Daughter introduced.*

**A**BOUT sixteen miles distant from Hill-den, in the village of Fairford, stood a mansion called Fairford-hall; irregularity of building, spaciousness without commodiousness, and gloom caused by the shade of surrounding plantations, were its characteristics.

Its inhabitants, in the summer season, were sir Gilbert Oxmondeley and his only child Eliza, with a sumptuous train of idle servants;—in the winter, a solitary old woman and her cat.

Sir Gilbert Oxmondeley had been born to the plain name of Gilbert Oxmondeley, and the profession of a glover, hosier, *et cetera*, in Cheapside; he was afterwards sent into the country as a rider to the house, and in one of these excursions of business, he saw, loved, and married his wife, Mar-

gery, who was the daughter of a corn-dealer and miller, and first cousin to Mr. Morden.

Furnished lodgings contained the happy pair, on little more than the thin diet of love, till the death of old Oxmondeley placed his son in his shop, and a joint of meat on his table every day, with the addition of a pudding on a Sunday and holiday.

At this period, a ride to Islington on a Sunday, in a buggy, with their only child, Miss Eliza, perked on a stool between them, was their most frequent pleasure; and an annual visit to Vauxhall the greatest luxury of the year.

About the time that Miss Eliza had attained her fifth year, the possessor of the Oxmondeley estate died a bachelor, without a will; half the men of law in the kingdom were employed, by various pretenders to relationship, to find out the heir; and, after many law-suits, difficulties, doubts and fears, Gilbert Oxmondeley was pronounced to have been third cousin to the late possessor, and was accordingly declared

Sir Gilbert Oxmondeley, baronet, with an estate of four thousand pounds a year.

Sir Gilbert was delighted, nay, raised above the sphere of man, in his own conceit; but he was still too wary a tradesman to let joy master reason, and thus unfit himself for the care of his newly-gained possessions: the law-suits had been a long time depending, some months had elapsed between their commencement and the death of the last possessor; thus there was much rent due to be called in, and much trouble to force it home.

Poor Lady Margery laughed too much with joy, at the completion of her wishes, to live long to enjoy them; she burst a blood vessel in her shouts of triumph, and survived her newly-acquired honours but a few hours.

Sir Gilbert had too many affairs of real consequence on his mind, to grieve much at the death of a wife: he consoled himself with the idea that there were plenty more to be had, who would jump at his title; but still more with the consideration that  
he

he did not want the comforts of a spouse so much, now he enjoyed such other and greater ones, as he had done when they had been his only solace.

The baronet, as is natural to suppose in a man undergoing so sudden a change of circumstances, lost what few good qualities he had ever possessed, in such vicious ones as he had never before dreamt of;—his sentiments and manners underwent as speedy a metamorphose, as the house and furniture of Goody Baucis and her good man Philemon. The counter-bow and smirk, with the indiscriminately applied sentences of, “much obliged to your ladyship,”—“thank you, sir,” were converted into a stiff gait and sneer at the little world below him, with a continual grumbling cough in his throat, which seemed to say, “Dam’me, don’t you know who I am !”

Miss Eliza had a tolerably good natural understanding, but it had been neglected for dress and amusement; she had read a good deal, but her studies had been confined to novels, from which she had imbibed

bibed such excellent lessons, that her every action was in imitation of some fictitious moonlight heroine, and her greatest effort at originality an attempt at some achievement which should out-do the most astonishing feats of the most romantic ladies, over whose sorrows she had ever wept the soft tear of sympathy.

Sir Gilbert's few remaining virtues were negative: the world called him a good sort of a man; and so he was if you gave him his own way; that is, unprovoked, he committed no outrage on his neighbours, nor swore at his servants, nor beat his animals—Lay but a straw across his path, and he never failed to stumble over it.

Sir Gilbert, on account of the relationship between his poor dear dead Margery and Mr. Morden, had been regularly in the habit of passing a couple of hours at the parsonage twice a year; namely, as he came through Hildden in his journey from London to Fairford-hall, and on his return against winter.

All the winter, Eliza was in the midst  
of

of gaiety, realizing, in imagination, all the conquests, sudden inspirations of love, and heart-breaking sneers at lovers, of which she had done nothing but read all the summer :—her two last visits to the parsonage, however, had given her some little matter for reflection ; she had learnt what she had heard before, but not attended to, and forgotten—that Rachel was a foundling !—How charmingly romantic ! she was dying to have her for a companion during the summer at Fairford.

She had entire dominion over her father in every point but one ; what that one was she had yet to learn : she offered up her petition relative to Rachel ; it was granted, but a compromise was made by Sir Gilbert that Emily Morden should be invited to accompany her, as he did not wish to appear to slight a relation in overlooking his child when he noticed a stranger in his family.

Eliza readily agreed to her father's proposition ; it did not oppose her desire of having Rachel with her :—and why did she so earnestly covet the society of Rachel ?

The

The histories of foundlings, of which she had read, always abounded with such a wonderful train of events, that she did not doubt seeing an equal number of strange adventures befall her new friend.

The invitation to Emily and Rachel was sent by Sir Gilbert to Mr. Morden; he knew the visit would be pleasurable to the girls, and seeing no ill consequences which could accrue from it, he consented to their passing two months at Fairford-hall.

Eliza came in her father's carriage to fetch them on the appointed day.

At the time of Emily and Rachel's setting out for Fairford, Mrs. Eringham had been nearly eight months at Hilden, and a degree of intimacy had been contracted between the two families.

Rachel and Emily had been bidding her farewell, and Alfred was returning with them to the parsonage, when Sir Gilbert's coach-and-four stopped at Mr. Morden's; and Miss Oxmondeley alighting from it,  
and



and perceiving them on the road, ran to meet them.

Alfred entered the parsonage with them, and they walked into the garden, while the horses were refreshing at the inn.

"I shall think it an age till you come back, Emily," said Alfred.

"Dear me! why?" returned she.

"The parsonage will look so dull, I shall hate to come past it," answered Alfred.

Emily giggled and blushed.

"Is that gentleman Miss Morden's lover?" said Eliza to Rachel, in a whisper.

"I believe not," replied Rachel.

"Oh! how well you can keep a secret," cried Miss Oxmandeley; "I shall admire to have you for my confidant."—She ran up to Emily—"Shall I invite him to come to Fairford, or will you?"—

"Who?" said Emily.

"He—there, that gentleman."

"Mr. Eringham?"

"Yes, Mr. Eringham; you would like to have him come, should not you?"

"He

"He is very pleasant," said Emily.

Eliza turned to Alfred, and the invitation was given and accepted in a couple of seconds; it was but just concluded, when Cranberry jumped over a little gate, from the adjoining field, into the garden: scarcely was his introduction to Miss Oxmondeley ended, when John Morden ran into the garden from the house, and informed him that he had followed him to summon him to attend a child who had broken its leg.

"So much the better for me," exclaimed Cranberry: "Ladies, adieu! excuse me, business must be attended to:"—he then turned to John, "Whose brat is it?"

"Joe Brown's youngest girl," answered John.

"Oh, damn it! a bad job, she's on the parish list," returned Cranberry; "tell them I'll come in a minute."

"Is she not equally susceptible of pain, as if she were not on the parish list?" exclaimed a voice behind: on hearing which, Cranberry turned round his head, and beheld Jonathan Parkinson, who, with Mr. Morden,

Morden, had just issued out from a side walk in the garden.

Cranberry might be surprised, but he was never at a loss to invent, what he thought, a clever excuse for any conduct of which he might be guilty. On seeing Parkinson he certainly blushed ; for there is a certain dignity in truth and goodness combined, that will inwardly overawe frivolity and false consequence, however well they may be outwardly sustained ; but instantly exclaimed in a voice half choked with an assumed laugh—" I'd have laid ten pounds to a shilling you said so ; ha ! ha ! ha !—did not I tell you he'd say so ?—Good morning ! Come, John, show me the girl ;" and away he ran, glad to escape, and John followed his footsteps.

Parkinson never triumphed where he had vanquished, thus Cranberry was not mentioned by him when departed ; he came to bid farewell to his little girls, as he called them. The carriage drove up to the door a few minutes after he had entered the garden ; " Do ye shake hands with me at parting,"

ing," said Parkinson. He put a paper, containing five guineas, into each of their hands, and immediately walked forward to prevent their thanks.

Arrived at the parsonage door, where Sir Gilbert's carriage stood, Jacob, all eyes, was standing at a short distance to see Rachel depart : Parkinson's eyes met his, and he immediately turned up the foot-path, and walked slowly homewards ; Parkinson walked a few paces in the same direction, and leaned against a post by the road side till the carriage drove off ; he then returned to the parsonage to fulfil his promise of dining with the curate.

## CHAP. XVIII.

*A little necessary Information for a Young  
Lady bred in the Country.*

IN driving through Hildden village, the carriage, containing the three young ladies, passed Mr. Cranberry's; at the door stood John, all attention to the drum and fife of a recruiting party collected before the Rose and Crown.

"Look at your brother," said Rachel to Emily:

"Oh, yes, quite in his element," returned she: "Do you know, Miss Oxmondeley, my brother John had such a mind to be a captain, and my papa would not let him be any thing but an apothecary."

"How vastly cruel, and absurd too, begging his pardon," replied Miss Oxmondeley; "I am sure he would have looked to advantage in a red coat—What charming creatures officers look in their red coats and cockades; I doat on them."

"And

"And does not a handsome man look as well in a brown coat as a scarlet one?" asked Rachel.

"Impossible, my dear! it gives a man such a grave, insignificant sort of a look; when regimentals make him so dashing."

"In my opinion," returned Rachel, "the most essential part in a man is that which dress cannot alter."

"Oh what shocking ideas you have, my dear, not to like to see a man look smart."

"Cleanliness and good sense, without vanity, are the only ornaments the sex requires, I think," said Rachel.

"Dear, well I'm sure I'd much rather have a man handsome," said Emily, and tittered as she concluded the sentence.

"Then you must make your husband, that is to be, turn officer, my dear," said Miss Oxmondeley; "and he'll look quite an enchanting beau, I'm sure."

"My husband that is to be! dear Miss Oxmondeley, whom do you mean?"

"Why, Mr. Eringham, to be sure, that  
you

you said you should like to have come and visit you at my papa's."

"Dear me, I thought you wished him to come."

"Don't coquet, my dear; you know you owned it before."

"Dear me! I'm sure I never dreamt of such a thing; I like him very well, but, dear, I never thought of any thing more; did I, Rachel?"

"I believe not," returned Rachel; "but it is impossible I can answer for your thoughts."

"Oh yes, you can, you fly thing," cried Miss Oxmondeley; "and I'm sure I can for the gentleman's, he looked so enchanted—so—oh dear, I don't know how, when I asked him to come and see you at Fairford."

"Dear me, how you talk," said Emily.

"Dear me, how you blush, my dear," returned Eliza.

A short silence ensued.

"That brother of your's runs strangely in my head," said Miss Oxmondeley; "I should

should doat on seeing him in a red coat."

"Don't you think Mr. Cranberry a smart man?" said Emily.

"Oh, quite the dash for a village, my dear; I should like him for a flirt vastly."

"A what?" asked Emily.

"A flirt, my dear."

"Dear me, what's that?"

"Lud a mercy! have you lived all these years in the world, and don't know what a flirt is? Why, my dear, it is when you let a man dangle after you, and hand you in and out of public places, and dance with you at balls, and say handsome things to you, and so on—a man that you don't like well enough to marry, only to make useful to you—that's a flirt, my dear."

"Dear me, how funny," said Emily, and tittered.

"Had you never any such?"

"Oh dear, no! I never went to any public places, or to any balls either."

"Oh, but you have been to church, my dear, and dropped your prayer-book, and



Mr. Eringham has picked it up; and then you have sent him out of the garden to fetch your slippers, because it grew damp, and made him climb the cherry-tree for you, and such things."

"Oh dear, yes."

"Why then, he's your flirt."

"Dear me, no! how can that be, when you never marry your flirts?"

"Oh! it's out, it's out!" cried Miss Oxmondeley; "then you do mean to marry Mr. Eringham?"

"Oh dear, Miss Oxmondeley, I declare I did not say so, I did not mean——"

"To confess," interrupted Miss Oxmondeley; "but it's out, and you can't help it,"

"Dear me, no, I'm sure it is not."

"Oh yes it is; is not it, Miss Rachel? but be easy, it is quite safe with me, it shall never slip, I promise you upon my honour.—Lord, well, I don't wonder at you, he is a vastly fine young man, only you should get him to be an officer; he'd look so the thing!"

"Dear me, Miss Oxmondeley, how oddly you talk."

Arrived

Arrived at Fairford, Emily and Rachel saw not Sir Gilbert till they met in the dining-room. Sir Gilbert shook them each by the hand, and then said, "Come, young ladies, sit down, you are as welcome to Fairford, as if you were princes; come don't be bashed, but do here as you would do at home."—They seated themselves.—"Well, miss," he continued, turning to Emily, "what will you have to begin with? though mine's a grand house, and I am a titled man, here's none of your frogs and soups and *kickshaws* at my table—no, no, old English food shall never be run down by French trash at Fairford-hall;" holding up, at the same time, by way of sample, a thick slice from a sirloin of beef, which he then laid with an air of triumph on his own plate.

Emily was at a loss how to answer.—Miss Oxmondeley spoke for her: "Lard, papa, don't talk so vulgarly; the young ladies don't know what to make of you."

The beef, which had served for a topic of discourse, acted equally for a retarder of speech, and some moments passed in silence.

—“Well, Bet,” cried Sir Gilbert whilst his plate was changing, “you must see and amuse the young ladies—show ’em the gardens, and make them acquainted about; that they may not be strange here, in a strange place, and tell ’em to take care they don’t tumble backwards into the fish-pond, while they are admiring the shell-work grotto, as my aunt Bridget did;—Lord help her, if she did not come out drappled like a drowned rat!—and then you must show ’em the old ruin that I built, with the stone robin on the top of it, through the glass there you have to look at the moon and stars with.”

“Oh me, Miss Morden,” said Eliza, “would you believe it, my papa can never remember the name of the telescope.”

“Aye that’s it, but I can never think of the name of it for my life; I bought it on purpose for folks that come here (for my house is a show-house; Mrs. Coke, the house-keeper, picks up a deal of money by people’s coming to see it) to look at my robin on the ruin with; it is as natural as life: there was one lady looking one day that  
thought

thought it so much alive, that she said she'd look till it flew away ; she'd have looked till she was tired I fancy, if she'd look for that, as Mrs. Coke told her ; I'm sure I laughed when I heard of it :—it is a very curious thing, that glass is ; do you know, miss," turning to Rachel, " I once saw through it, at four miles distance, a country girl in the garret of a cottage tying up her——"

" Lack, papa, how can you talk so vulgarly," interrupted Miss Oxmondeley ; but in her delicate haste to dismiss the well-known subject, she unfortunately forgot her father's spirit of perseverance ; and the velvet ligament from whence arose the gallant order of knighthood, never cost its fair wearer more words than Sir Gilbert now bestowed on the worsted bandage of brown Joan.

The arrival of a green goose upon the table, however, put a close to his harangue ; for though he never had the honour of passing a corporation chair, his perceptive taste, and copious appetite, had given him a most indisputable claim to the honourable function.

## CHAP. XIX.

*New Ideas.*

SIR Gilbert and his daughter were best pleased with each other, when the world would have imagined they had most reason to be reciprocally dissatisfied; thus they were always in the highest good humour when apparently in the heat of dispute.

The reading of novels, without sufficient discrimination to choose characters worthy of imitation for the rule of her words and actions—and to regulate them by novels, Miss Oxmondeley thought highly becoming, as has already been said—had given her a language and manners, whose flippancy and ill-managed gaiety her father, unlettered in the qualities for which he mistook them, conceived to be elegance and wit: the former of these qualifications he left her at liberty to display as it best suited her inclination, contenting himself with

with its silent admiration ; the latter he could not forbear using perpetual methods to draw forth, and by being himself the constant provoker of her tongue, he had led her into a habit of making him its constant butt.

Thus he hugged himself in being the fool who displayed his daughter's folly, whilst she was satisfied in her imitation of the pert daughters, of whom she had so often read, who showed off their wit in sneering at their stupid old fathers.

After dinner Sir Gilbert, as was his usual custom, retired to an apartment consecrated to the fumes of tobacco, and dignified by the name of study : its contents, however, save what was bound in glass, would never have caused the head of a beau to ache, had he perused them all in one day ;—all the information they could give was that of a catalogue, for the books were wood, and the inscriptions on their backs all the reading they afforded.

One real paper book, however, lay upon the table, the History of the Rebellion, and

Sir Gilbert actually read in it sufficient every afternoon to lull him into a nap, as his pipe drew towards its conclusion.

As Sir Gilbert was leaving this sanctuary of Somnus, and his opiate son Tobacco, the female party were returning from the garden. "Here, here, misses," exclaimed the Baronet, "walk this way, I have got something curious to show you here—walk in, this is my sanctum sanctorum."

He returned into the apartment, and they followed him.—"Well, now, how do you like this?"

"A valuable treasure, indeed, Sir Gilbert," said Rachel; "I shall hope to be indulged with access to some of these books."

"There! there!" cried Sir Gilbert with ecstasy, "Miss is taken in, I declare; why they are nothing but wood; rap your knuckles against them, and you'll hear them sound quite hollow.—They're all a contrivance of my own, a wooden child of my own brain, as I may say."

"Nobody doubts the child's affinity to its parent, I dare say," said Eliza.

"Oh

"Oh you saucy jade," cried Sir Gilbert, and stamped his foot at his daughter in pretended anger.

Rachel heard without seeming to observe, and commented in her own mind,

Emily tittered.

"And what I pride myself on more than the contrivance is, that they are all made of oak, off my own estate," said Sir Gilbert as he followed his daughter into the tea-room.

"Well, misses," continued the Baronet, after a pause, "have you seen my new ruin?"

"Oh yes, sir," said Emily, "and I think it very old looking and pretty."

"And the robin?" asked Sir Gilbert.

"Dear me, yes," returned she; "and I declare I could have almost sworn it was going to hop away."

"Ay," said Sir Gilbert in a doubtful tone, as if speaking on a subject on which he was not decided whether he had acted well or ill, "I once thought of having it made to hop about by clock-work; it



would have cost me a handsome sum of money, not that I should have minded that, but I was puzzled where to hide the man that must have kept in the ruin to wind it up, and keep it going.

“ How beautifully romantic are those woods rising on the verge of that valley !” said Rachel, pointing out of the window by which she was sitting.

“ Oh, delightful !” exclaimed Eliza ; “ they put me so much in mind of Fontainville Forest, I often fancy myself Adeline. I wish the house had a little more gloom about it, that the neighbourhood and people who come to see it might fancy it haunted. Papa is so cross he won’t consent to have a room shut up, and order Mrs. Coke to tell the visitors that a spirit walks in it.”

“ Spirit indeed !” said Sir Gilbert ; “ who would believe it, or care about it if I did ?”

“ Oh ! every body,” returned she ; “ the tapestry-room would do exactly ; you should have two out of the three windows blocked up, and put in the old purple velvet bed-  
stead

stead that is laid up in one corner of the garret, and have an old suit of battered armour made and hung up against the wall, and say that the spirit always puts on that when it walks, for we hear it clatter as it strides about the room."

"Where the devil did you ever pick up such stuff and nonsense?" replied he.

"Why, papa, if you had ever read a single fashionable romance, you would not have asked such a vulgar question; why it is exactly the way all the haunted chambers are made up."

"Phoo," cried he, "do you think I'd make my house as much of a lie as those whimmy books? No, no, there's no deceit at Fairford."

"But the ruin of three hundred years standing, that was built last summer," returned she with a smile of victory.

"Ay, you must have one of your witty jokes, or it would not be you," returned the Baronet, looking first at Rachel, then at Emily, to have his applause to his daughter confirmed by them.

On the following morning, a walk in the plantation was proposed by Sir Gilbert, immediately after breakfast, and the challenge accepted by the female party.

Rachel, who modestly conceived herself every where an intruder, as not knowing what right of being noticed she derived from birth, had quickly seen Sir Gilbert's passion for enumerating the advantages of his rank, and pointing out the beauties of his situation, to an attentive listener and observer; and considering herself bound to make him the only return in her power, for the favour he had shewn her in his invitation to his house, moved by his side during the walk, the very companion he wished for.

Miss Oxmondeley never ridiculed her father out of his hearing; she then strove to raise his consequence in the thoughts of those with whom she conversed, that her own wit might appear the more acute when she subdued him.

Emily and she strolled, arm in arm; Miss Oxmondeley recounted to her companion the principal incidents of the last novel she had

had read, and then began her criticisms; but as Emily had never read more than she had been obliged to read, and that reading had not been at all in the line in which Eliza read, she knew neither to approve her remarks, nor confute them; accordingly the topic grew uninteresting to her who had begun it, and dropped.

Presently Miss Oxmondeley exclaimed, for talk she must, "Oh, my dear, I wish your brother John were here!"

"Do you?" said Emily.

"Oh, yes, he'd dispel my *ennui*."

"What?" said Emily.

Eliza repeated her sentence.

Emily remained silent.

"I suppose you were never troubled with that horrid disorder; were you, my dear? Oh me!"

"Dear me, are you ill?"

"No, I am only vapoured."

"But you said, John could cure you."

"Oh, yes, my dear; his presence could alleviate my complaint, I believe, if he could not quite remove it: I know he is a tolerably  
rational

rational creature, from what you told me about his wanting to go into the army ; at all events, he is a man, and a little harmless intercourse with the sex is absolutely necessary to keep me alive."

" Suppose I send for him," said Emily.

" Do," returned she, " write him a letter directly.

" But," said Emily, " I don't know how he'll get here, without you ask Mr. Cranberry to come, and bring him in his gig."

" Oh ! I should admire to have him ; and Mr. Eringham can come with them, you know, which will be delightful. Let us run in and write the letter directly."

Away she ran towards the house, and Emily followed her.

" Where now, where now, in such a hurry ?" exclaimed Sir Gilbert.

" I'm going to ask some beaux to dinner to-morrow, if you have no objection, papa," she called out, but neither turned round her head nor stopped for the resolution of her question.

## CHAP. XX.

*Adroit Execution of favourite Plans.*

RACHEL soon after joined Miss Oxmondeley and Emily Morden, and was immediately informed, by them, of the company they had invited to pass the following day at Fairford.

"John's to be my beau," said Eliza; "Eringham you know, of course, will be entirely engaged with Emily, and you shall have the doctor; what think you of him?"

"That he does a great deal of harm, without intending any," replied Rachel.

"What, you are in love with him, and he does not know it?" returned Eliza.

Rachel had much reason to believe he was not indifferent to her, and had privately done all in her power to discourage his addresses; and now, smiling, in a manner that left Miss Oxmondeley no doubt of her conjecture being a false one, she answered, "I think him a man whose friv-

ities

lities are rather assumed than real, and whose follies, by being mixed with a small tincture of sense, often excite less derision in the minds of his auditors, and observers, than they merit."

"Oh, I adore a man of sense that trifles," cried Eliza, "because trifles are less suited to his nature than matters of consequence; and thus the subjects on which a woman talks may often be too hard for him."

"Excuse me," replied Rachel, "but I should be mortified, rather than elated, by gaining a triumph over a man of real sense, on a trifling topic, to which he had descended merely in accommodation to my abilities; indeed, I rather dispute the soundness of the understanding which condescends to trifle, where it ought to aim at raising a mind."

"That's the very reason I would pique it, my dear; because it is pride that makes it trifle with our weak sex, for fear the benefit of its liberal conversation should raise us to an equality."

"Then it defeats its end both ways,"  
said

said Rachel ; “ for there must, in my opinion, be a great degradation of its pride, in both instances.”

Eliza did not meet her father till they assembled at dinner; she had never yet been contradicted in her wishes; but still there was a mixture of resistance and disapprobation to some of her actions, which arose in her father's temper, which called for all her art to render their accomplishment and enjoyment complete; this she knew would be the case in the present instance; thus, immediately on seeing him, she began artfully to throw the disguise of necessity over the step she had just taken.” “ Miss Morden's brother will, I hope, give us the pleasure of his company at dinner to-morrow, papa,” said she, seating herself at the table.

“ Oh !” said Sir Gilbert : this short monosyllable, always as copious as various in its meaning, here implied a long sentence; it meant—“ I think I might have been consulted about who was invited to my own house and table.”

“ I hope



"I hope Mr. Cranberry won't be called out to-morrow, Emily," continued Eliza, "John would be disappointed, not to come and see you, I am sure; and ten to one if Mr. Cranberry would suffer him to come in his gig alone."

"Alone! why who's coming with him then?" said Sir Gilbert, with his mouth so full as to render the sentence intelligible only to his daughter, who was accustomed to hear him speak from a choked throat.

"Why, it was impossible for me to do less than invite Mr. Cranberry," answered Eliza.

"Who is he?" asked the baronet.

"A gentleman of the Faculty, who has Mr. John Morden under his tuition," answered Eliza.

"Hum," replied the baronet; as copious a monosyllable as the former, and containing nearly the same import; "I intend," continued he, "to give Mr. Morden, and both his sons, an invitation myself to come and pass a few days here, in a week or two, and see the beauties of my place."

Emily bowed, speak she durst not, for  
had

had she ceased biting her tongue, a laugh, excited by the cunning of Eliza, would have burst from her lips.

"Papa," said Eliza, in a voice of the utmost cheerfulness, varied from the sober tone in which she had spoken the last sentences she had uttered, "we want you to point out a nice walk to us, this evening, about the grounds, and shew the young ladies a few of the curiosities." She was well aware that this request would act as an immediate metamorphic shock on his temper, and kicked Emily and Rachel, under the table, to observe its effect.

"Oh, yes, with all my heart," replied Sir Gilbert; "I'll take them a pleasant round—Have you seen the Chinese temple yet, and the piece of water before it, with the image of that god in it.

"The figure of Neptune, my papa means," said Eliza.

"Ay, Neptune, Neptune," replied he, "so it is, but I never was much a fancier of your gods and goddesses, so I never studied any of their names; I never remember only who one of them is for five minutes together,

and that's Venus, the god of love, at the end of the yew-tree walk ; — I know him."

Tea was ordered in the Chinese temple ; Sir Gilbert was worked by his daughter, into a belief that Cranberry would be transported by viewing the beauties of the place ; and perfect good humour was restored in the person of the baronet.

The displaying of the beauties of Fairford-hall, was by no means the particular foible of Sir Gilbert ; it was only an accidental one ; the exhibition of Fairford, which " he had improved," in his own words, in that of the world altered from the gloomy antiquity in which he had found it, into an incongruous composition of the modern, the antique ill imitated, and inventions of his own, which favoured sometimes of both fashions, and sometimes of neither, was the hobby of the summer months ; in winter, the brilliancy of his daughter's dress, and the splendor of his own house and equipage in one of the first squares, constituted an equal delight : — if he visited a watering-place, he not only expected every one to read on his countenance that he was a baronet, but

actually imagined they did, and feasted himself on the common civility paid to strangers, which he arrogated peculiarly to his own dignity of carriage ; in short, he wanted to show himself, at all times, of importance : he had no intellectual merits, or knowledge, which could claim him any respect above the rest of mankind ; so was forced to content himself with deriving it from an empty name, and full purse.

But, alas ! how often were his wishes deceived ! how often were the beauties of his grounds passed without a remark to elevate or transport, sometimes with a sneer to depress the praise-loving soul of the owner !—how often was the splendor of his town equipage drawn forth, without exciting the envy or admiration he looked to raise in its beholders ! how often did strangers address him with the plain epithet of Mr.— ! Oh Vanity, what vexation dost thou carry along with thee !—thou hast only one companion that can free thee from disquietude of spirit, the same is thy only apology—Ignorance.

CHAP.

## CHAP. XXI.

*Improvements suggested.*

IN the evening, a clod-pole, who had been employed by Miss Oxmondeley to carry Emily's letter to her brother, returned with the answer; and having received his promised reward from the hand of Eliza, she flew with the letter to Emily, for whom it was directed.

It contained the wished-for information, that the beaux, as Eliza called them, were highly flattered by the invitation, and would be at Fairford early in the morning.

"Dear me," said Emily, "what will Sir Gilbert say to their coming so soon in the morning?"

"Oh," said Miss Oxmondeley, "I'll tell him they come early on purpose to see the lions."

"Dear me," returned Emily, "why you have no lions here, have you?"

When Miss Oxmondeley could suppress her laughter sufficiently to explain herself, Emily much approved her friend's intention ; but Rachel said she feared it was a hazardous plan, as she hardly imagined the gentlemen would investigate the curiosities of Fairford with the leisure or attention Sir Gilbert would expect, from the account she had just given him of their taste."

" Oh !" replied Eliza, " leave that to me, I know every step my father takes in a morning, and will lead them a different way from that I know he has taken ; and when we meet, which I'll contrive shan't be till dinner, I'll tell him I have been forced to show them all about myself, as I could not find him."

" But should the deceit be discovered—" said Rachel.

" I'll contrive some excuse, I warrant me, to bring us off," said Miss Oxmondeley.

" And if it should not—" continued Rachel hesitatingly.

" Why all the better," replied Eliza, insensible

sensible to the very gentle reproof Rachel ventured to give to her improper conduct.

"I was quite frightened at dinner," said Emily, "when you told your papa about their coming."

"Oh, I know how to cuff him over," replied Eliza, half ashamed she did not possess absolute dominion over her father.

"And now he does not know Alfred is to be here," returned Emily.

"I have a trick to introduce him with," replied Eliza.

"I think you run great risks, Miss Oxmondeley," said Rachel, "of incurring Sir Gilbert's displeasure, to obtain a gratification which the anxiety of its purchase occasions must, in my opinion, in a great measure outweigh."

"Oh ! that's half the pleasure," returned Miss Oxmondeley ; "it is so romantic to impose on a father, and so delightful to plan schemes and stratagems for seeing the pretty fellows."

Rachel durst admonish no farther, on so slight an acquaintance, with one, acknow-  
6  
ledged

ledged by the world so far her superior in rank, and remained silent. Emily Morden, who never thought for herself, was always of the opinion of the last speaker.

On the succeeding day, Sir Gilbert, as was his usual custom, walked into his grounds immediately after breakfast; he had strolled nearly the round, had rested once in the hermitage, and stopped twice to admire the Chinese temple (his favourite building, because it had cost the largest sum in erecting), when proceeding, he arrived within a few paces of the ruin, which represented the angle of a gothic building, with a dilapidated window supported between two mouldering pillars. As he stood viewing the venerable structure, a voice behind it called out, "Here's at your cock-robin!" and immediately a large stone flew over his head.

"Hollo! hollo!" exclaimed the astonished baronet.

"Hollo! hollo!" repeated a voice.

"What's here, an echo?" cried another speaker. "Hollo! hollo! again."

The baronet was mean while rapidly ap-



proaching, and distinctly heard his daughter say, " Oh Lud a mercy, it 's papa, I dare say ! I hope he did not see us."

" I'll climb up these stones and peep," said the first voice.

In a few seconds a face appeared through the frame-work of the window ; and in less than an instant the fragment of antiquity, in reality no more firmly built than it was really meant to appear, yielded to the weight imposed upon it, crumbled, fell, and carried with it to the ground the person in question.

The scene fallen, the actors behind it became conspicuous ; and Miss Oxmondeley, Mr. Cranberry, and Rachel, appeared standing in various attitudes of terror and surprise—Miss Emily and Alfred sitting on the grass, at a short distance from the scene of action, and John Morden lying prostrate amongst the ruined ruins.

" Here 's a pretty spot of work !" cried the baronet, " the mouldering walls of my abbey all in ruins !—How the devil came you to climb up it, you imp of vexation ?"

" Have

"Have you hurt yourself," said Eliza, advancing to John.

"Oh, no!" said he, rising gently, while he held one hand on his back, and rubbed his left knee with the other.

"If you had broken your neck, I should not have pitied you," cried the baronet.

"If he had," returned Eliza, "it would have signified little to him whether you had or not—your compassion would be of much more consequence to him now, for I'm sure he 's hurt."

"Here 's at your cock-robin, indeed!" exclaimed Sir Gilbert, settling the flaps of his waistcoat with both his hands, and moving about his fingers in painful agitation.

"Give me leave to introduce Mr. Cranberry to you, papa."

Cranberry bowed, scraped, muttered a great deal, and said nothing.

"How do you do, sir?" said Sir Gilbert impatiently.—"If it had been my Chinese temple, instead of this ruin, I'd have broken our neck for you myself, puppy!" he continued, turning to John.

"Is there a Chinese-temple in these gardens?" asked Cranberry with affected eagerness and pleasure.

"Yes sir, yes sir," answered Sir Gilbert, placidity returning to his brow.

Cranberry had already received his cue from Eliza, and now, turning quickly round to Rachel, exclaimed, "Oh you cruel creature, not to point it out to me, when you know my partiality for those buildings!"

John Morden, advancing to Sir Gilbert, said, "I beg pardon, Sir Gilbert, but I thought those mock ruins had always been built stronger."

"Well, well," said the baronet, "it is some consolation that I can afford to build another."

"If I might be allowed to speak," said Cranberry, "I think it gives the idea it was meant to convey much more forcibly in its present state, than it did before."

"Indeed!" replied the baronet; "surely not:" he gave a moment's pause to observation, then added, "Let me stand when you do a minute, sir, if you please."

Eliz

Eliza ran up to her father, and peeping over his shoulder, "Oh, decidedly, decidedly!" she cried.

"Decidedly! what?" asked the baronet.

"More mutilated, papa," answered she.

"Oh, infinitely more ruinous and dilapidated," added Cranberry.

"But my robin is lost," said Sir Gilbert with a sigh; "I don't like that."

"Ay, flown away," cried John, still holding his knee; "it would have been a good thing for me if I could have taken wing like it;" a wink to Eliza and Cranberry followed this sentence.

"Why, did you really think it was alive?" asked the baronet, with pleasure sparkling in his eyes.

"Why, was it not?" said John, with affected surprise.

"Ha! ha! ha!" exclaimed Sir Gilbert, unable to contain his ecstasy; "you were really taken in then, ha! ha! ha! you are not the first that has been taken in about that robin."

"No, nor the last neither," said Eliza, looking archly at her companions.

"No, no, no," returned the baronet; "I can't help laughing though at the thoughts of it;—I can easily have the ruin mended, and another bird put up."

"Besides, you can vary your subject, and the deception will have the better effect," remarked Cranberry.

"True, sir, true, so it will; those that have seen it before, will think the robin has flown away indeed," returned the baronet.

"But the Chinese temple, Sir Gilbert—"

"I'm on the road to it now," answered the exulting baronet: "walk you behind, Eliza," continued he; "you have seen it often enough, and it is not worth a pin without you have a clear view of it breaking upon you from amongst the trees:—walk on, sir, walk on, the path will lead you to it;" and on they moved, Eliza and John rejoicing in the happy change John's manoeuvre had worked on the baronet's temper.

## CHAP. XXII.

*Duets, harmonious and discordant.*

“THAT ’s a charming figure !” said Cranberry, as they passed the statue of a gladiator.

“ Yes, there’s plenty of them god-heads about,” answered the baronet : “ I can’t tell you the names of them though ; there they are, if you can find them out.”

Emily and Alfred had moved off, unseen by Sir Gilbert, on the fall of the ruin, lest they should share his displeasure ; and when the walk to the Chinese temple was proposed, Miss Oxmondeley had not called to them to join in it, as she considered herself bound, by the rules of romance, not to interrupt the tender moments of those whom she looked upon as lovers. When arrived within an hundred yards of the Chinese temple, weary of the restrained conversation to which she was obliged, in her father’s

presence, and to that but in moderation, as he considered any other tongue than his own an impertinent interruption of his observations, she slid into an arbour which opportunely presented itself, and John obeyed her signal to follow, both unobserved by Sir Gilbert.

At the foot of the steps leading to the door of the temple, it was Sir Gilbert's usual custom to turn round and direct the eyes of the company to a view of the country through a vista cut in the trees, which had lain behind them as they had advanced. Impatience generally made him out-run the troop of starers by a few paces, when he approached the object of curiosity; he had done so now, and on giving his body the usual circumvolution, to his astonishment the accustomed speech of "Now look behind you," was addressed to empty air—he stood alone.

A moment's pause was necessary to draw breath; he drew a long suspiration, and cleared the way for the loud and potent apostrophe of—"Damnation!"

A mo-

A moment's reflection (for Sir Gilbert often reflected, though not often to the purpose) taught him that "Hollo" was a much more sensible exclamation on the present occasion, and half the word had just escaped his lips when Rachel and Cranberry issued from behind a laurel bush close at his elbow; "Oh, I thought I had lost you!" exclaimed Sir Gilbert; "where are the rest?"

"Miss Oxmondeley and John Morden left us at the turn of the first walk leading into the wood, Sir Gilbert," said Rachel.

"It is very odd," cried he, "that Eliza cannot let the company all keep together till they have seen what's worth looking at; it's always her way to separate the party."

"Shall I run after them, Sir Gilbert?" asked Cranberry.

"No, sir, no; thank you, sir, no. Where's Miss Morden, can you tell, Miss Rachel?"

"We left her near the ruin, Sir Gilbert."

"Why did not you call to her to come



with us to the temple ? did she not know whither we were going ?”

“ She’s chained to a magnet,” said Cranberry.

“ Why, what is she after—what is she doing, eh ?”

“ Sighing in soft responses to Mr. Eringham’s notes of tenderness,” replied Cranberry.

“ Sir Gilbert,” said Rachel, “ she is walking with a young gentleman, an intimate in Mr. Morden’s family, who accompanied her brother and this gentleman to Fairford ; I dare say they don’t know where we are ; shall I run and call them ?”

“ How foolish then of Eliza, if there is another strange gentleman here, not to ask him to come and see the temple ; it’s the prettiest thing about the place. Stay you here, sir, and Miss Rachel, a minute or two if you please, and I’ll go and hunt them all up, and bring them here ; it is always Eliza’s silly way, to make one ten times longer going round the grounds than one need be ;—I won’t be long.

Eliz

"I'll go by the short cuts," and away he bustled.

The reason of Cranberry and Eliza's separation from the baronet had been, that a butterfly had attracted the eye of Cranberry, and he had run behind the laurel bush in pursuit of it; Rachel, reared herself by compassion, felt its warmest glow towards all created beings; and seeing Cranberry's aim, followed him to sue for the insect's liberty, which its own wings had secured it before she came up with its pursuer.

When the baronet left them, Rachel placed herself on the steps of the temple.

"How blest must that being be, who, after having excited so tender a regard in your heart, as the butterfly you this instant condescended to patronize, possesses rationality to thank you for your tenderness," said Cranberry.

"With that endowment," replied Rachel, "I should have had less reason, and consequently less courage, to interpose in its behalf."

"Oh," returned Cranberry, "the most liberally endowed may be objects of compassion, and little is the courage wanting either to give or receive the bequest of pity."

"It may offend the object compassionated, however much he may need commiseration, if he be of a proud spirit," answered Rachel.

"But there is a species of pity, whose desire damps the arrogant heart into thinking its bequest its greatest treasure, while it raises the meekest into an opinion of meriting it."

"It proves itself to be an exalted sentiment of the heart," answered Rachel, "by its powers of bestowing joy equally on the object who gives and receives it."

"How adamant, then, the heart that refuses it!" cried Cranberry.

"That depends on the worthiness of the object that seeks it!" replied Rachel.

"Is the virtue less, because misapplied?" asked Cranberry.

"If given without proper investigation, it degenerates into weakness," said Rachel.

"But does not the object, who dares to seek it, merit that a due investigation be made of his worthiness, or unworthiness, before he meets a refusal?" In uttering this sentence, Cranberry seated himself by Rachel, and took her hand between his.

Rachel withdrew it with a gentleness but confidence of manner, and said, "General and particular cases should not be argued indiscriminately; the argument should be given clearly before the debate is commenced.—Lay down your thesis, and I am willing to make it a subject of discourse."

"Cruel Rachel!" said Cranberry.

"Call me ignorant, if you please," retorted Rachel; "but it is you who are in this case the inflictor of cruelty, by asking me to resolve a point, you will not condescend to let me clearly understand."

"Oh Rachel! can you then require to be told, that the case in question is a particular one; that I am the object of pity, and your hand the only one at which I can receive an alleviation of my pain?"

"I feared I saw your meaning before," answered

answered Rachel, "and cannot but blame myself for not having sooner undeceived you, if you ever imagined I thought you an object of pity."

"Wretched devil!" cried Cranberry, laying his hand on his heart.

"Oh, no!" replied Rachel, "fortunate in my frank avowal of my sentiments."

"What, that you hate me?" exclaimed Cranberry.

"No," returned she; "that I will not render you a real object of compassion, by giving you myself without my heart; I may pity the unfortunate, and esteem the worthy, from an intellectual feeling that tells me I am only acting rightly in so doing, but love is an effusion of the heart which cannot be commanded."

"Oh, damn it! damn it! damn it!" cried Cranberry; "I never loved a woman in my life but——"

"You found another more worthy than the last."

"No, no," said Cranberry, in affected ecstacy of sorrow.

"But

"But you, doubtless, thought me more worthy than the last you addressed?"

"More perfect than the junction of your entire sex," answered he.

"Forget, then, you ever tried to soften my hard heart," replied she; "and you will quickly, I doubt not, find one infinitely my superior."

"Impossible!" he cried; "I never loved till I saw you, and can never convert the passion into any other shape than that of the angel who first inspired it."

Miss Oxmondeley and John, at this moment, appeared in view.

"Will you persist in hating me?" said Cranberry with energy.

"Far the contrary; I must be flattered by the compliment you have paid me."

"Compliment! believe it the frank avowal of an open heart."

"I will," said Rachel, "believe it such, on condition that you will favour me, by believing I have as frankly spoken my sentiments."

She then advanced to meet Eliza, and he slowly followed her at a short distance.

CHAP.

## CHAP. XXIII.

*Secrets.*

**W**HEN the party had at length, with much trouble, been collected to view the Chinese temple, (for one had stolen away as quickly as another had been found,) the morning had elapsed, and the dinner bell warned them to return to the house.

Dinner passed off, as might be expected, with some laughter, more restraint, and much invitation to the strangers to eat; Sir Gilbert assuring them "the entire contents of the table were the produce of his own farm and gardens."

After dinner, Sir Gilbert waved his pipe to drink with the gentlemen, a ceremony both they and the ladies could have excused; and immediately on tea being ended, they were obliged to depart on account of their long ride home.

When they were gone, Sir Gilbert retired to his study, to enjoy the fumes he had politely

politely procrastinated, and the misses were left to their own chat.

"What a pleasant day we have had!" exclaimed Emily the moment Sir Gilbert disappeared.

"Only think of the ruin tumbling down with poor John," cried Miss Oxmondeley; "I thought I should have died with laughing when I saw papa; and how well John managed to settle his temper, by making him believe that he thought the stone robin had flown away.—Well, my dear, how have you liked the day?" continued she, addressing herself to Rachel.

"These grounds must be pleasant in any weather," answered she, "particularly in such as we have been favoured with to-day."

"Pshaw, my dear," returned Miss Oxmondeley, "who thought of the silly trees and grottos? I meant the animated part of the scene, the men, the beaux; how did you like them?"

"Much as I have done since I first knew them, sometimes better, and sometimes worse,



worse, according to their actions," answered Rachel.

" Well, is not John a fine heroic spirit ?" said Eliza.

" I think he would be more of a hero with less audacity," replied Rachel.

" Oh, Lord !" exclaimed Miss Oxmondeley, " that's the very quality I admire him so much for; it gives such a zest—such a warmth—such an enchantingness to all his actions; he was certainly born to be an officer, and will be one too before he dies, or I am much mistaken in him. As to Alfred Eringham," continued she, but interrupting herself, " it is not fair to require a comment on him from any lips but Emily's. Well, my dear, how was he to-day ?"

" Very pleasant, I thought," said Emily.

" Declared his passion, I suppose, as he has done a hundred times before, in words meaning nothing, yet conveying something—very old, yet always new."

" He talked very odd and comical," returned Emily.

" Ay,

“ Ay, my dear, all true lovers border on absurdity ; they are never deeply smitten till they talk nonsense.”

“ And is it necessary for a *woman* in love to descend beneath the little sense she may possess, to convince her admirer of the sincerity of her affection ?” asked Rachel.

“ Oh, fye, my dear, you must always make a man believe you hate him ; the creatures grow so presuming on an avowal of an affection, that you might as well be married at once as confess you love.”

“ And if we really love,” returned Rachel, “ don’t we wish to approach as near as is becoming to the state of happiness we expect from matrimony ?”

“ Why, my dear, that depends a good deal on the spirit of the woman and the temper of the man ; if she wishes for a little authority, she must exercise it before Hymen has tied his knot, for if her husband is wise, he’ll never let her have any afterwards.”

“ Dear me ! how you speak against the privilege of your own sex !” said Emily.

“ Yes,

"Yes, but it is only to my own sex, my dear," replied Eliza: "I should preach a very different discourse to the men, and mean to contract a very different engagement whenever I tie myself up to any one of them."

A summons from Sir Gilbert, for his daughter to attend him in his study, broke up the conversation.

When she returned to the supper-room, her father entered with her; she affected gaiety, but it was easy to perceive that the affectation of a gay humour but thinly varnished over a countenance whose real contour was gloom.

It has already been said, that there was one point in which Sir Gilbert had long predetermined that his daughter should not have her own inclination unless it coincided with his, and that she had still to learn what that point was; Sir Gilbert had that evening disclosed it to her.

Rachel was scarcely in her chamber, when Miss Oxmondeley rapped at the door, and begged to be let in; it was opened to her, and

and shutting it cautiously after her, "Oh, my dear," said she, seating herself on the foot of the bed, "do, for heaven's sake, sit down by me, and talk to me a few minutes : I am so troubled ; Papa has been talking so queer and cross to-night !"

"I thought you appeared uneasy at supper," said Rachel.

"Why, my dear, I am more perplexed than uneasy ; I want advice, will you give it to me ?"

"To the best of my ability," answered Rachel, "provided you will promise me not to be offended if I express my real sentiments with frankness."

"The very thing I wish, my dear ; oh, how happy shall I be in you for a confidant ; I know you are discreet, and won't betray me, because you don't tattle about your own concerns. I like Miss Morden very well, she's very good-tempered, and so on, poor thing ; but I am sure she could not keep the secrets of any body else, for she can't help blabbing her own."

"Rachel would not accept a compliment  
at

at the expence of another, and answered, "that great frankness was an indication of the heart being free from guile, and so far a praise-worthy quality."

"Ay, and it may be construed another way," said Miss Oxmondeley; "but, however, let it pass; you won't tell Emily, my dear Miss Rachel, what I am going to confide to you?"

"Indeed I will not."

"Nor any living soul?"

"You may depend on me."

"Well then, my dear, don't laugh at me; from the first moment I heard what a fine spirited young fellow John Morden was, I could not rest till I got him here to Fairford to learn more of him, which was the reason of my asking Emily to invite the party that dined here to-day; and Oh, Rachel, I am so desperately in love with him," (the tears started in her eyes,) "that if he was but an officer, or had any means of maintaining me, I'd run away with him in spite of any body."

"You speak," said Rachel, "under the warmth

warmth of a first impression; calm your spirits, and give reflection a little time to work."

"It is all in vain," said she, "I never can do otherwise than love him; I meant in a short time to have told my papa so, and got him a commission bought, and have married him, never supposing my father would contradict me in the only thing that could make me happy, when he had indulged me in so many foolish whims before."

"But how do you know he will object now?"

"Why, my dear, you shall hear: this evening you know he sent for me into the study; he blew out his red cheeks, as he always does when he is angry, and called out, 'So, Madam Bet, a fine day's work I have had of it forsooth with the unmannerly boys you must take it into your head to invite here without my leave.' 'Lauk, papa, cried I, why you never used to object to my asking whom I pleased.'

"He did not attend to what I said, or at least answer it, but continued, 'Here's my ruin dashed to pieces, and myself quite  
knocked

knocked up with trudging about to get them all together to see the Chinese temple ; for when people do come here, whoever they are, I am determined they shan't go away without seeing the beauties of the place. Well, it has been for once, and it is over, that's the only part that pleases me ; and I command you, at your peril, not to ask them, or any visitors of the kind, again.'

" ' Dear papa, why Miss Morden's brothers will expect to come sometimes while she's here.'

" ' I shall invite them at my time with their father,' replied he ; ' it is not the mischief of the day I so much complain of, for, thank heaven, my pockets are able enough to repair that, and a million such, if it were necessary, without being the worse for it (papa's amazingly rich, really, she parenthetised), but your getting so intimate with these young fellows is what I don't approve of, and what I won't suffer.'

" ' Dear papa,' answered I, ' when you approve of my receiving Miss Morden and her friend on terms of the greatest intimacy, why

why should you be displeased at my acquaintance with her brothers, and their friends ?

“ ‘ Because there is a wide difference between male and female friends,’ he returned ; ‘ the girls will never fall in love with you ; and your wild harum scarum behaviour, your romantic turn of mind, as you call it, makes you conduct yourself in a way that may provoke any fellow to that, or ten times worse, perhaps, and you to encourage him in it, for any thing I can tell to the contrary.’ ”

“ ‘ No man, sir,’ I replied, ‘ will attempt to step beyond the line of familiarity that a woman draws for him ; and, I trust, I have sufficient pride to guard me from not making that line sufficiently distant.’ ”

“ ‘ Ay, it’s fine talking,’ he exclaimed ; ‘ that’s a speech out of one of your non-sensical books—Damn the trash ! I suppose you have just been reading about some fine miss that fell in love with a curate’s pennyless brat, and was turned out of doors by her father, and then lived upon



salt and onions with him in an hovel—all for love!’

“ ‘ Dear fir, you grow so warm, and really without any just cause.’

“ ‘ Well, well,’ cried he, softening, ‘ I only wanted to tell you in cool terms,’ and again the choler rose into his inflated cheeks, ‘ that I had rather you would disgrace yourself by bearing a bastard, for then I could turn you adrift and have done with you at once, than break my heart by marrying a fellow without a title, and bringing me a legitimate brat, that I could not keep my estate from.’

“ Towards the end of this sentence, my dear, he grew into such a passion that I really felt quite frightened at him, for the first time in my life ; I did not answer, for I did not know what to say ; he took two or three turns about the room to cool himself, and then said, ‘ I’m not angry with you now, Bet ; there’s no harm done at present, at least I hope not ; and it is only my love for you, and my desire to see you a person of great consequence in the world,  
that

that puts me in such a passion : I never contradicted you in my life, you always were indulged from a child, and have always had what money you wanted, and what clothes you liked, and all manner of things innumerable, you know, you have, and you shall soon have a husband becoming your station, but he must be of my choice ; I and my friends are on the look-out, and when he is found, if you refuse to marry him, you go to a convent that instant, and I'll leave every farthing I'm worth to the discharge of the national debt : and if ever you contrive to slip through my fingers, and marry any puppy of your own liking, I'll ruin him with law-suits for stealing an heiress ; and, when you are reduced to starvation, not a doit shall you have from me whilst I live ; one shilling shall be your legacy when I die : and if you have a boy, and the law can't release me from making him my heir, I'll tie up my estate from him till your death, that you may not enjoy one farthing of what was mine : there, I am not angry with you now, I hope I have no

reason ; I am only telling you what would be : it is in your power to avoid it, and I dare say you have sense enough to do it for your own sake. Now, you know my mind on my darling wish and hope of life ; so kiss me, and there's an end of that.'

" He kissed each of my cheeks, gave me an affectionate hug, and was bustling out of the study, when, suddenly stopping, he exclaimed, ' Do you want any money, or any thing ? I only wish to restrain you in one point.'

" ' No, thank you,' I answered ?

" ' Come, come, you had better have some,' he said, and taking a twenty-pound note out of his desk, forced it into my hand, and then led me into the supper-room."

Here Miss Eliza stopped to take breath, blow her nose, and wipe her eyes ; Rachel remained silent ; and Miss Oxmondeley, having regained a clear respiration, continued, " Well, my dear Rachel, did you ever hear or read of so unfortunate, so miserable a creature as myself ?

" Console yourself," returned Rachel,  
" with

"with the hope that the man on whom your father's choice may fall, will prove equally pleasing, in your estimation, as John Morden."

"Impossible ! I shall hate and detest him, whoever he is. What a cruel situation ! doomed to a convent, or the arms of a man chosen for me by my father, a creature that can have no motive for marrying me but the fortune I shall bring him."

"But such an one may not be so easily found as your father expects ; and I should hope, for the honour of the sex, there will not."

"Oh, my dear," returned Eliza, "honour is as much out of the question, with the kind of man I am destined to be chained to, as love ; they marry their wives as they choose their coats and carriages, from fashion, and have as much affection for the one as the other."

Miss Oxmondeley's prospects of future life appeared, to Rachel, gloomy and unfairly imposed ; she could say but little to console, and she was too wise to utter a

word which might lessen the father in the daughter's esteem; thus remained silent.

After a short pause, Eliza said, "Perhaps poor John will never know how much I love him."

"In your situation, I think, it were desirable he never should; for if the same passion inspired him—"

"Oh, delightful!" interrupted Miss Oxmondeley in ecstasy.

"In idea," replied Rachel; "but in event—"

"Misery!" she cried; with equal emotion.

"Then," said Rachel, "wish him never to know your feelings; wish it for your own sake; consider how much easier it is to forego what we have only desired to obtain, than it is to resign what we have once possessed."

Farther conversation passed on the same subject between the new friends, but it served little to console Miss Oxmondeley, though it produced her a negative comfort, by dwelling on the theme nearest to her heart; at length, with exhausted spirits, she retired to her own apartment, and Rachel to bed.

CHAP.

## CHAP. XXIV.

*Effusions of Gratitude, Love, and Liberality.*

IN the course of the following week Mr. Morden and Eugene passed a day and night at Fairford; Mr. Morden brought with him the intelligence expected by his daughter—that Alfred Eringham had proposed himself for her husband, had been received by him, and that she was to return to Hilt-den to receive his addresses.

Rachel was pleased that her friend would be settled to her wish; and Miss Oxmond-ley was glad at the event, because it removed Emily from Fairford, and she had, for some time, begun to think her an inter-ruption to the confidential discourse she wished to hold with Rachel. The baronet also was not sorry that his daughter was now enabled to retain her favourite compa-nion independently of the Mordens, upon the males of which family he could not for-

hear casting a suspicious thought connected with his daughter.

The liking which Miss Oxmondeley had at first taken to Rachel was merely the effect of whim, but, on strengthened acquaintance, it grew into real friendship; she found in Rachel so many qualities to render her deserving of esteem, qualities to which, though she did not possess them all herself, she was by no means blind, that as the winter, the season of returning to London, approached, she began to grow uneasy at the thought of being parted from her.

Rachel found, in Miss Oxmondeley, a very different mind to what the gaiety of her heart gave the world to believe she possessed; she was untaught in many points which she possessed by nature, and which wanted only to be cultured into strength.—She was always amiable when she knew how to be so; she had been too much permitted to think her own inclination the right, to behold various scenes and incidents of life in their true light; but she had sufficient strength of intellect to correct her improprieties.

prieties, when they were pointed out to her, and to be thankful to her corrector.

Her love for John Morden could not be named more harshly than a foible in a partial view, in the sight of those who suppose parental authority unlimited.—Happy had it been for Miss Oxmondeley, had the severity of her father, in the point which most interested her happiness through life, been dispersed in the restraint of follies to which free indulgence had been given; and some particles of that indulgence reserved for the more material event.

Every passing day, which curtailed the stay of Sir Gilbert's family in the country, brought increasing anxiety upon his daughter, at the idea of losing one, whose society afforded her so great pleasure and comfort; and she determined to ask leave of her father to take Rachel with her to London, for the winter.—“I never refuse you any thing, you know I don't; and I'll give you money to equip her, if she wants it,” was the answer.

Miss Oxmondeley flew to have her wish



ratified by Rachel ; but she declared that, happy as she should feel herself in the journey, she would not decide, without having first asked the advice of him who had acted the part of a father to her through life.—Miss Oxmondeley accordingly, fixed the next day, for taking her in her father's coach to Hillden, to consult Mr. Morden ; Miss Oxmondeley very little doubting a ready concordance in her request, and Rachel not suffering herself to form any opinion till she should hear his.

Arrived at the parsonage, Mr. Morden was not a little surprised by the sight of his unexpected visitors, and still more when Rachel requested him to step into another room with her.

“ My dear sir,” said Rachel when they were alone, “ I have been invited by Sir Gilbert and his daughter to pass the winter with them in London.”

“ And what is your determination ?” asked the curate.

“ I come to receive it from your lips.”

“ I can :

"I can have no right to resolve your actions, my love."

"You have acted the part of a father towards me," answered Rachel; "shall I be ungrateful as to forget that of a daughter to you, by depriving you of the authority that name entitles you to?"

"Too grateful, girl!" he returned, and pressed her hand in his: "The reference then," he continued, "you place in me, I think it becomes me to transfer to a third person—I think it becomes you also," he added, after a short pause.

"To my second father, Parkinson—you doubtless mean, sir."

"Call him your first, my love; recollect that it was his humanity which first introduced you to me, and now gives you that support which he is not less kind for bestowing, because you never should have wanted it from me."

"He is deserving my warmest gratitude," replied Rachel; "he has ever had it, and ever must deserve it, should he even now desert me; but you have my heart, a

sensation softer than gratitude beats in my breast towards you.—Where has been the difference between a real father and yourself?—You have reared my infancy, made happy my childhood, and given instruction to my maturer years: you have done more than all this, you have called me your child! How my heart has throbbed to meet your embrace, when I ignorantly called you father, and you caressed me as your own!—Oh! had Parkinson suffered me to tell him all my gratitude as I have done to you, had he called me his child as you have done, I could have fallen at his feet and revered him!”——

Morden's utterance was choaked, he could only cough to clear it.

“Why does he forbid the object of his benevolence the greatest ecstasy his bounty could bestow on her—the effusions of her overflowing heart?” continued Rachel.

“It is,” said Morden, “because he will not humble those he benefits, by receiving a confession of his own superiority.”

“Oh

“ Oh that I could unite the respect I bear him with love!” answered Rachel.

“ While you are grateful to him, you are not faulty,” said Mr. Morden; “ but we are not now met on this subject.—Parkinson was in the garden when you arrived; I will call him in.” So saying, he left the room.

The natural gravity of Parkinson's disposition, and the idea of his belonging to a sect whose dress he wore, left Rachel little hope of the pleasure she had promised herself from the journey in agitation, now the determination was left to him: he would advise against mixing in those scenes of dissipation and levity, with which she well knew the great world abounded; and, however strong her inclination to visit the novel scene, how could she refuse to follow his counsel, when she had once asked it?—She was greatly his debtor, and resolved, if he made the slightest objection to the proposed plan, to lighten, in her own mind, a part of the debt of gratitude she owed him, by cheerfully adopting his opinion, whatever it might be.

When Parkinson entered the room, he had been informed, by the curate, of the question which was going to be referred to him.

When counsel was asked of Jonathan Parkinson, he uniformly delivered his real sentiments the instant he had arranged them for speech: he made no prelude of, "If you really wish me to speak," or, "Don't be offended at what I may say;" he considered these as insults to the person who had solicited his advice, as supposing them not decided in their own minds, that they wished to hear the advice they asked, and thus laying obliquely an imputation of falsehood upon them.

After the usual salutations, he began speaking on the subject in question. "Thou art invited to the city of London, I am told, Rachel?"

"Yes, sir, and with your opinion on the propriety of my accepting or refusing the invitation."

"Propriety, I do take it," said Parkinson, "is the right mean of regulating our actions ;

actions ; thou must then, thyself, determine on the propriety of the journey."

" How so ?" asked Rachel.

" By determining what will be thy conduct in the strange city."

" It is difficult for me," said Rachel, " to say how my hours will be passed, in a place which I never saw, of which I have heard and read so many varying accounts, and whose nature it is to throw out so great a number of various invitations to pleasure, at present unknown to me ; particularly as I shall be at the will of others."

" But thou wilt still have dominion over thy mind," returned Parkinson ; " and if thou hast sufficient fortitude to answer for thy stability in virtue, do go thou to the city of London :—the body cannot be unsafe in any place where the mind is well regulated."

" Oh, sir," replied Rachel, " it is an easy task for those to be virtuous, who have once had pointed out to them the superior courage it requires to support vice."

" Well said !" cried Parkinson ; " thou wilt

wilt please thy friends who have solicited thy company, and learn a little of that busy life, of which we ought all to know just sufficient to prefer a tranquil state of existence, especially those who are past the spring of their years."

"Then I may tell Miss Oxmondeley, I will attend her?"

"Thou may'st."

"But, my love," said Mr. Morden, "there is one circumstance I must mention: Are you aware of the many unavoidable expences you will incur in London, in a family like Sir Gilbert's, living in a continued round of fashionable amusements?"

"Miss Oxmondeley was so kind as to offer me any supply of money I wanted," answered Rachel; "but I thanked her, and told her it was my intention, if I did go with her, to avoid company."

"And why?" asked Parkinson.

"I am unknown; I am nobody, but the child of your mutual benevolence," said Rachel.

"If

“ If thou art unknown,” returned Parkinson, “ who shall object to thy being a fit companion for them ?—and that I believe was thy thought.”

“ It was, indeed, my opinion, sir, that I should be despised, being what I am.”

“ Man doth not carry a tablet on his face, to say from whom he is descended; if he did, it would, perhaps, be happier for the world at large ; good qualities might stand a little better chance of being respected, and empty titles less revered.—I do wish men did, and then——Well, well, it matters not.—Thou shalt do as thy companion doth.—I will furnish thee the means—good-day !” He immediately left the room, and shut the door in face of Rachel’s thanks.



## CHAP. XXV.

*Learned Controversies with a Pedant ; and  
romantic Discourse with a Lover.*

**T**HE visit to Hildden, though it proved agreeable to Miss Oxmondeley in the gratification of one of her darling wishes, was equally disappointing to her in regard to another: John Morden was out with Cranberry on an operation, and was not expected to return home till the evening, or late in the afternoon, and Eliza had promised to be home to a late dinner at Fairford.

Whilst Rachel was closeted with Parkinson and Mr. Morden, Eliza was left in the parlour with young Hutchinbunck; she had seen him before, and knew his story; indeed they were acquainted, commonly so called by the world, that is, the name of each had been repeated by a third person to the other.

Richard Hutchinbunck was, by this time, well read in books, without knowing much  
of

of men; his understanding had been sufficiently cultured for him to be sensible that when he spoke he did not talk nonsense; and he was too little conversant with the world to imagine that plain sense, and open truths, could be laughed at: he had been taught, and well understood, the requisites for forming a man, but he was ignorant how to draw his forces out into action.

No sooner were they left alone, than Eliza began a conversation: "You come from Holland, don't you, sir?"

"I told you I did, miss, last year, when you asked me the same question."

"I believe you did," she replied.—"Do you wish to return?"

"Why should I?" said he.

"You like England best, then?" cried she.

"I did not say so," he answered.

"You implied it, I thought," she returned.

"You misconstrued my words, then," said he: "Holland is my patria; I am a native of the republic, and esteem it for giving

ing me birth ; I owe my thanks, nevertheless, to England, for the knowledge I have acquired in it."

" You have read a great deal then, sir ?"

" Most authors of note in the Grecian, Latin, and English tongues."

" And whose style do you prefer ?"

" They claim equal attention in different points," said he : " the Greeks in the sublimeness of their writings ; the Latins in the melodious flow of their poetry, and the strength of their oratory ; the English are most excellent in their fictitious writings."

" You admire Udolpho then, sir, I dare say ?"

" I am not versed in Italian."

" Oh, Udolpho is English ; it is the name of the book ; a romance by the incomparable Mrs. Radcliffe."

" I never read such insignificant works as romances," he replied.

" I thought you spoke in praise of fictitious writings, just now, sir."

" The fictions of Homer, Sophocles, Virgil, Shakspeare, and Pope, are not novels."

" No,"

"No," replied she, "but a good many of them are plays."

"On historical subjects," said he.

"And those that are not," returned she, "are ten times more insignificant, and out of the way, than any novel you can point out to me in the language. What child will be silly enough to believe, that gods and goddesses came flying down to lend a hand at a battle, as Homer has written?—or that a monster of a dozen feet high, with one eye in his head, and that in the middle of his forehead, ever existed?—or that frogs and mice dressed themselves in spatter-dashes, made spears and lances, and went out to battle against each other.—It's too ridiculous a vast deal, and, in my opinion, not a degree above Tom Thumb, and the story of Sanbad the Sailor."

"Oh, shut your ears, ye shades of Homer, Virgil, and Shakspeare!" exclaimed young Hutchinbuck.

"Ay, now as to him, Shakspeare," continued she, "if any body were now-a-days to write a play with witches, boiling cauldrons,

drons, and ghosts popping up their heads by dozens, to talk to a man fast asleep, who but would laugh at the author? To hiss them they would not have an opportunity, for I am sure no manager in his senses would ever receive such stuff."

"This was a newer language to Dicky, than the Koran would have been to Nero; and he exclaimed, "Have you no reverence for sublimity of thought, loftiness of idea?—a true poet's thoughts must soar on wings of air."

"Yes," said Eliza; "but an't they sometimes apt to mount too high, and get half obscured in the surrounding vapour?"

"The greater the labour in searching after a hidden sense, the greater the pride in finding the truth," replied he, with exultation.

"Why, there's a mischief in that again, I think," answered she; "for the truth is so often found in so many different meanings by different puzzlers, that it is a hazard next to the grand prize in a lottery, if one of them stumbles on the right at last."

"Omne

"Omne tulit punctum"—Dicky was beginning, when Eliza, starting suddenly up, exclaimed, "Oh, now you begin with your Latin, you frighten me to death; good-morning! I dare not stand the engagement a moment longer: I know you'll laugh at all I have been saying, and think me a fool; but don't pride yourself on the novelty of the thought, for it has long been a decided point:" and away she ran into the garden to meet Alfred Eringham, whom she, at that moment, perceived to be entering it.

"I cannot doubt it," said the student to himself as she left the apartment, and returned his eyes to his folio.

"Oh, do take pity on me, Mr. Eringham!" she cried; "that book-worm Hutchinson has been so provoking about his Homer, and stuff, and abusing all romances and novels in such a manner, it was quite shocking. Come, you must be an advocate for romance, it is so great a friend to true lovers."

"Yes, but it encourages rivals," returned he; "and there I should be inclined to quarrel."

"Fight,

"Fight, and become the victorious knight!—have not I concluded the sentence prettily?" exclaimed she.

"Yes, for a romance," replied he; "but I believe there are few men, out of print, who would prefer fighting their way to a mistress's heart, to getting quietly into possession."

"Dear me!" cried Emily, who was advancing, and had heard the last sentence, "I would not have him fight for the world."

"You are right, my dear, for there must be more than a miracle in his favour for him to win it, and it would be hardly worth his having, when he had got it."

"I would not be troubled with it," replied Alfred; "I have plucked the inviting apple from the tree of life, and covet nothing farther of it."

"And what have you left poor me?" asked Miss Oxmondeley; "a crab or a windfall?"

"Oh, no!" replied he, "the apple Eve gave her husband."

"What

"What is that?" said she; "the fruit of sin, or temptation?"

"The non-pareil," replied he:

"Oh, lord! don't you attempt to be witty," cried she, "or I must run away from you too; but, I forgot, that's the very thing you want;—beg pardon for not taking the hint sooner; adieu, a pleasant tête-à-tête to you!"—And she struck hastily into another walk, and returned to the house.

In the parlour she found Mrs. Eringham, who had called to visit Rachel and Mr. Morden.—"Where's the Dutchman, sir?" said she, to Mr. Morden, after curtsying to Mrs. Eringham.

"Do you wish to see Mr. Hutchinbunck, ma'am?" replied the curate, on the point of rising from his seat.

"Oh, sir, for heaven's sake don't call him in, he frightens me to death with his learning; I've had one dispute with him this morning, and two in a day would be too much for me.—Pray, sir, was his father a printer?"

"No, ma'am."

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L

"I thought



"I thought he might have caught his reading by setting the press, for he seems to have read a great deal, and to know very little."

"He has much knowledge, and is too deeply read to converse pleasantly; I believe, at least with ladies."

"Is it then so difficult, sir," said she, "for those who have acquired a little more learning than their neighbours, to descend, accidentally, to the level from which they must have risen?"

"It is, I believe, for those who have little more acquaintance with the world than what they have gained from books," returned Mr. Morden.

"Umph!—It is a pity he's not introduced," said she; "he'd be quite a novelty in life.—Pray, sir, has this learned fit held upon him long?"

"Ever since he knew what learning was, he has been as strongly attached to its acquirement, and as peculiar in his manner, as you now see him; he has been bred up without the use of athletic exercises, and delights

delights not in them ; pleasures there are none here for him to follow ; thus books are the only resource for his mind."

" Really ! quite a character."

The carriage was shortly after announced. — Jacob Lamb found an excuse for stationing himself near the parsonage-door when the coach drove up, and did not leave it till the carriage was out of sight.

## CHAP. XXVI.

*An Introduction to the Pleasures of Life.*

**N**OTHING material occurred, till the day arrived on which the journey to London was to commence. Sir Gilbert, his daughter, and Rachel, moved in the baronet's own coach and four. Two post-chaises followed with the female servants, and four men on horseback attended.

In passing through Hildden, Sir Gilbert made his accustomed visit to the parsonage; Jonathan Parkinson and Mrs. Eringham were there, to bid farewell to Rachel, as also Eugene and John.—Miss Oxmondeley's soul glowed on perceiving him; but, alas! during their short stay at Mr. Morden's, there was no plea for leaving the room; and, while her father remained in it, she could only admire in silence.

Cranberry was also of the party; leaning over Rachel's shoulder, he whispered in her ear,

car, "Must I despair?—cannot I soften a heart cruel only to me?"

"Mr. Cranberry," she replied, "I have been candid with you in declaring the real feelings of my heart, on the instant you demanded an explanation of them. Why will you not indulge my words with your belief?"

"Oh damn it! damn——" cried he; Rachel rose, crossed the room, and did not hear his sentence completed.

When Sir Gilbert made the motion to depart, Parkinson went up to Rachel, "God bless thee;" he said, "and give thee power to protect thyself against evil." He then put into her hands a parcel, containing notes to the amount of seventy pounds, and thirty guineas in cash, and retired.

An affectionate blessing from the curate ended the sorrowful ceremony of separation, and the coach drove on.

On the second evening they arrived in London. Sir Gilbert's house was in one of the most fashionable squares, magnifi-

cently furnished, and sumptuously maintained.

A maid-servant to attend her, Rachel was told, was an indisputable necessity; and one was immediately procured for her by Mrs. Coke: her hair, much against the inclination of its possessor, who considered Nature's form as the most becoming, was put into the hands of a French friseur.—The Queen's milliner, also, acted her part towards the transformation of our heroine; and an eminent mantua-maker had not less employment about her person:

Equipped for conquest, the routine of plays, operas, balls, routs, and shops, began; every body visited Sir Gilbert, and Sir Gilbert of course visited every body; he gave sumptuous parties, where every body liked to go, accordingly every body invited him in return; he was *now* a baronet, no matter what he had been; into their origin, half his acquaintance would have been as sorry to have had inquiry made as himself.

The fashionable term, *every body*, may want

want explanation:—when a man visits every body, he is meant to be engaged in one, two, three, or more visits, every evening, in a certain circle which never varies: thus his thoughts never err beyond it, and seeing it always busy, and always the same, he naturally concludes that no mortals, who wish to be happy, can be out of it; of course, he visits every body.

Rachel's first *entrée*, was at an opera. Miss Oxmondeley and herself were charperoned by a Lady Varny, who shared Sir Gilbert's box in the house; the ladies occupied the front, the beaux fluttered behind. Lady Varny had been handsome, but she had seen half a century, and her charms were not what they had been; she was an incessant rattler, and one who never suffered a general compliment to pass without assuming it particularly to herself. The young men in the box paid her compliments, because she returned them in the most convenient article to their ideas—an open house for loungers. The few moments she was not engaged, in declaring

how little right she had to the numerous compliments addressed to her, and, by expatiating on her unworthiness, seeking still greater, she told Rachel who were the performers, pointed out the most approved airs in the opera, was in raptures with the singing, which the loudness of her own voice prevented both her and her party from hearing; and in ecstasies with the dancing, though she turned herself all the while from the stage in order to converse with those that stood behind her.

Rachel and her party did not enter the house till the first act of the opera was over, because it was unfashionable to go sooner; and, immediately on the curtain dropping, after the second, when Rachel was full of pleasing anticipation of the concluding ballet, "Come, let us go now," said Lady Varny, "or we shan't get a squeeze."—"Aye, come, do, let us make haste," cried Miss Oxmondeley, "I'd forgot the lobby."

Rachel could have no will but that of her companions, and rose to follow them;

Lady

Lady Varny invited her to lean on one of her arms; Miss Oxmondeley took the other, and away they sallied, Lady Varny calling out, "Some of you men go first, and clear the way." Glad to escape what had been a necessary restraint, the men, as Lady Varny called them, obeyed in clearing the way—but it was for themselves, into a back passage which conducted them behind the scenes, where they meant to lounge till the house cleared.

With much difficulty the ladies squeezed into a little room, into which, at least, thirty times as many as it could contain were striving to enter, and then stuck hemmed in by a fashionable mob.

"Ain't this charming?" said Miss Oxmondeley to Rachel.

"It seems to be very generally thought so," answered Rachel.

"We shall have the men here in a minute," cried Lady Varny, with a significant nod to Rachel, which implied, "you'll like it then."

After being pushed backwards and for-



wards by the crowd, as far as the extent of the apartment would allow, for some considerable time, for a voluntary movement was impossible, a youthful beau of about sixty approached them; "Do, Sir Harry, call up Miss Oxmondeley's coach, will you?" said Lady Varny.

"I heard your servant announcing it this moment in the outer lobby; shall I hand you?" returned Sir Harry.

"In a minute," replied she; "have you any thing new?"

"Nothing particular," he answered, "only Lady Gab was yesterday married to General Howitzer."

"Gracious! you don't say so? Why, he's the very man for whom she had, her whole life, declared the greatest aversion."

"Why," replied Sir Harry, "the world is ill-natured enough to say, that as her ladyship and the general were engaged in a rubber, about three weeks ago, at the Viscountess of Loo's, the general's glass eye, by accident, fell upon the table——"

"Glass eye!" interrupted Lady Varny.

"I only

"I only speak from report," returned he; "yes, a glass eye; and that her ladyship, who has an excellent taste for *nic-nacories*, was so charmed by its structure, that she immediately resolved on giving him her hand, for which he had long been a private suitor."

"It is lucky for the poor man he has a blind eye to turn to her," cried Lady Varny, "she paints like a sign-post;" straining a laugh which she could scarcely effect, owing to the plaister which confined the muscles of her own face. "Come, Sir Harry, will you beau me?" she added.

"You honour me," he returned.

With extreme difficulty, and much crowding, they gained the carriage; and Rachel returned home, meditating on this first specimen of fashionable pleasure—some would say, persecution.

## CHAP. XXVII.

*A Tête-à-tête which introduces a Limb of the  
Law that merits amputation.*

THE great companion and intimate friend of Sir Gilbert Oxmondeley was a Mr. Blackman, who having risen in the world under the patronage of Sir Gilbert from a mean situation in life, possessed, in its full extent, the cringe of submission usually to be found in a dependent on a titled man.

He had originally been a Newgate solicitor, next a petty-fogger in the Borough; he was now risen to some eminence, lived at the west end of the town, and was generally accounted a proficient in the science, though his knowledge lay more in the quirks than in a real acquaintance with the art: he was rich, and what he possessed was truly his own, for he had never stolen a farthing; to cheat his clients, with their eyes open, was but to take, unasked, what they meant to bestow on him. Since his  
rise

rise in life, a little convenient dabbling in usury had gained him a knowledge of the affairs of many of the principal families in the metropolis; and a ready communication of all the secrets he was entrusted with to his patron, was the recompence of Sir Gilbert's former assistance and continued countenance.

This was the man whom Sir Gilbert had selected for the two important purposes of being on the look-out, as he genteelly called it, for a titled man for Bet; and of taking a pipe and bottle with him, every day, after dinner.—For in London, as well as at Fairford, Sir Gilbert had his sanctum sanctorum; only it could not yet, in his opinion, stand in competition with the study at Fairford, for the books were as yet real paper ones, and not manufactured from wood off his own estate: the ornamental change was soon, however, to take place.

To one who delights in seeing the various works of Nature contrasted, the afternoon tête-à-tête of these Bacchanalians would have afforded high entertainment.

Before

Before the fire stood a square table supporting the implements of fumigation, amongst which must be included the juice of the grape; in the right-hand corner, farthest removed from the door, in an arm-chair with a yellow velvet cushion, and mostly supporting a gouty leg on a stool, whose covering was formed of the same material, sat Sir Gilbert; from under his full-bottomed white wig peeped a pair of grey eyes, made solely for the purpose of seeing; his nose was not sufficiently prominent to be perceived by an inaccurate observer; his cheeks, when at rest, appeared like the sun in a misty sky; when extended for the purpose of emitting the collected smoke from his parched lips, fringed with drops of wine, his countenance exhibited a striking resemblance to that of a blowing porpoise; a plush coat with embroidered trimmings and gilt buttons, a tambour waistcoat, through the third button-hole of which, was drawn a fringed cravat, and whose extended flaps, meeting the tops of his fleecy stockings, rendered

almost

almost useless a pair of black velvet inexpressibles, together with chamois shoes and square stone-buckles, completed his grotesque appearance.

In the opposite corner, on a plain chair, on whose frame he supported his heels, sat Mr. Blackman, with the elbow of the hand in which he held his pipe supported on his up-lifted knee ; and, being short of stature, his figure, in this position, resembled an Ethiopian baboon ; nor did his countenance, on minute investigation, dispel the risible idea his form had raised ; his cheek-bones were prominent, and tinged with a lively purple ; his eyes, which were apparently starting from his head, were continually in motion, and kept time as accurately as the pendulum of a clock ; the muscles of his nose, of which, had not Nature uplifted the point, in pity to his mouth, to whose entrance it would else have proved a continual bar, were uniformly contracted as in disgust at an offensive smell ; his lips were pouting, and formed a curve inclining to the chin, from which, had any unwary

wary knight of the razor accidentally pruned a sharp protuberance, they would together have formed as accurate a circle as any described in the renowned books of Euclid. A few thinly scattered hairs, which descended in a tapering queue, whose greatest length was an inch and a half, encircled a neatly powdered but bald crown. A suit of black exhibited at once his function, and his administration of it ; a laced cravat, and long frill, showed his taste in dress ; inked ruffles gave a proof of his pressing business ; an ornamental ring attracted some few eyes to a shrivelled hand, whose mulberry hue might else have passed unnoticed ; and a pair of brilliant buckles conferred the same friendly office on a bowed ancle and pigeon-toed foot.

Now the voice of Sir Gilbert was thorough bass ; that of his friend hissed, and whistled like a cracked reed.

Thus, then, suppose them seated, and the following conversation to have taken place, by fire light, towards the middle of the gloomy month of November, the subsequent

quent evening to Sir Gilbert's arrival in London.

When they had, after dinner, retired to the study, and the important business of filling and lighting their pipes was concluded, and Sir Gilbert had cleared the way to discourse by a couple of glasses out of the fresh bottle—"Well, Blackman, now for the news!" he cried.

"Well, Sir Gilbert," said Mr. Blackman, first turning round his head in order to be certain that the door was shut, "I have been longing for this afternoon; I have been on the look-out;" the lawyer adopted the baronet's phrase, he knew that illiterate men are doubly delighted with pleasing tidings related in their own favourite words—"I have been on the look-out, and I think, that is, I believe, I may say, though I cannot be certain, that I have found a match that will suit."

"Aye!" cried the baronet, taking the pipe from his mouth: "What's his rental?"

"Why, as nearly as I am able to guess, without much over-rating or under-valuing his



his property, I take Sir Baulile Paragon to be worth between—it may be more, it may be less—but I say somewhere about five or six thousand per annum.”

“I say, hold your tongue, and don't be so long-winded!” cried Sir Gilbert; “why did you not tell me who it was at first?—I know all about him; his father, Sir Oliver Paragon, inherited his fortune from his brother, Sir Davison Paragon: he was famed, in Bucks, for his fox-hounds; married either Miss Jemima, or Polly, Arbutnot, second daughter of Sir Gregory Arbutnot: I know all about it, I tell you, and I hate to hear people tell me what I know.”

Mr. Blackman bowed, but ventured not to answer that this information was not new to him.

“And so he is the man, is he?” continued Sir Gilbert, filling his glass; “here is his good health: I don't know but I may think about this; six thousand per annum, and a title, are things not to be looked over.—How much is the dowager Lady Paragon's annuity?”

“Twelve

"Twelve hundred pounds," returned the intelligent lawyer.

"Jointured on her for life, or at her own disposal?" asked Sir Gilbert.

"At her own free will," returned Blackman.

"Umph!" cried Sir Gilbert, and went on whiffing his pipe.

"Sir Bauble is expected to land in England, every day, from the grand tour," said Blackman. "Whether he has made Germany a part of his route, I can't exactly say."

"Who cares whether he has or not?" exclaimed Sir Gilbert; "I had rather he had never been abroad at all. — What is the use of travelling to foreign countries? — Nothing but squandering abroad, what had better been spent at home. Go where you will, you can see nothing but houses, and trees, and fields, and churches, and monks and women; one talks English, and another jabbars French, and curse me if I could ever understand a word on't!"

"I should hope," said Mr. Blackman, having

having first grinned applause to the last sentence uttered by his patron, "that, should this union take place, which I sincerely wish may prove to the satisfaction of all parties, my pen might be honoured——"

"Aye, aye, there's time enough to think of that; besides, it comes of course.—Where does Lady Paragon live?"

"In G—— square," replied the little man in black, drawing up his head and extending his chest upon the strength of the important information he had given.

"Then, I'll tell you what; as I think Bet's at an age when the sooner she's married to my mind the better, for fear of accidents I'll go to-morrow morning and visit her ladyship, and see how the land lies; if I like it I'll bid for it; if I don't, why there's no harm done, you know."

"Certainly not, certainly not; it can give her ladyship no offence."

"Offence!" cried the baronet, "I'd have her to know I have had concerns with people of twice her consequence—Why, have not dukes, and all sorts of quality, come

come to my house, and don't I go to theirs?—Why, if my wife Peggy was alive, poor soul, would not she be Lady Oxmondeley?—Aye, and Lady Oxmondeley's husband's family were created baronets two reigns before the Paragons."

"I only meant, Sir Gilbert——"

"And I neither mean nor say any thing but what I can prove, and what all the world knows, so there let it rest;—and now pen a fashionable sort of a note to her ladyship, and tell her, that if she'll be at home to-morrow morning, about twelve o'clock, I'll do her the honour to call on her about some *particular business*."

Mr. Blackman laid down his pipe, and wrote the note in question; and the baronet did not object to it, though his amanuensis had been bold enough to say, that Sir Gilbert intended himself, and not her ladyship, the honour of a call.

And whilst this epistle is on its journey, we will dedicate a couple of chapters to giving our readers some account of the truly paragonic Sir Bauble.

## CHAP. XXVIII.

*A fashionable Plan of Education for an only  
Child possessing a Title.*

SIR Bauble Paragon was an only son, left at an early age, by the death of his father, to the care of his mother, Lady Paragon.

This lady being a lady of town, and at the same time what she styled the most indulgent of mothers, had initiated her son into all the graces of polite life: a mode of education so congenial to the taste of this sprig of nobility, that, at fourteen years of age, he could game, dance, drink, bet, repeat verbatim every rule in Hoyle, recount the pedigree of every family, of rank with equal facility that he could run over that of their racers on the turf; determine on the elegance and fashion of a new dress; embellish his scandal with all the spicy essence of invidious sarcasm, and was very expert at the use of a quill, though there have

been persons sufficiently ill-natured to affirm that it was only in the capacity of a tooth-pick.

Sir Bauble had been taught to write and read; and, at this age, it was deemed necessary that his sirship should have a tutor: a French tutor was accordingly advertised for, and obtained; and Lady Paragon, in the height of her indulgence, and true regard for her darling son, thus addressed him: "I shall not be difficult about your salary, Monsieur Frivole; the acquisition of polite instruction should not be acquired for nothing; and this, I am well assured, you are competent to give my son." (Now, gentle reader, if your information does not extend so far, it is necessary, for your comprehending this speech of Lady Paragon, that you should be told that a woman of ton considers every foreigner as a man of polite breeding, fashionable manners, and possessing a certain elegance that claims admiration and respect; while an industrious Englishman, too often starving, because he is English, meets a sneer when his situation ought

ought to excite compassion, and a rebuff instead of charity ; while a foreigner, because he is a foreigner, whether count or scavenger in his own country, commands whatever degree of respect he pleases in ours.) “ But I must beg of you,” continued this kindest of mothers, “ to be very particular in one point—not to contradict him, or force him to learn one word more than he is willing to learn. I have delicate nerves myself ; he inherits them, and too much study might affect his brain : I dread the idea ! ”

“ Je ferai mon possible,” returned Monsieur Frivole.

“ Observe this injunction, I beseech you,” cried Lady Paragon : but this was an unnecessary repetition of her wish ; for though Monsieur Frivole was one of those gentlemen who refuse their services till they finger the cash, he was a great master of the art of politeness, and understood good breeding too well to contradict a lady who was kind enough to offer him an extravagant salary for doing nothing.

Sir

Sir Bauble now made great proficiency in the French language ; nay, it became so much his natural tongue, that he generally, *by mistake*, addressed the servants in that language, and then stared, with surprise, at their asking an explanation of his words.

How despicable is that affectation of knowledge which lies in a few sentences, parrot-like acquired, and dares exercise itself over an inferior, who has not the opportunity of real learning, or the puppyism of pretending to its shadow !

Nor was he deficient in Italian ; Topple, the spaniel, was now called Macerini ; Lady Paragon herself was saluted with the title of Signora ; and the salt was purposely spilt at table to introduce the learned exclamation of “ Ah Dio ! ”

Meanwhile, from fear of lessening his beauty, or breaking his spirits, every wish had been gratified, many anticipated ; thus every thing he saw he wanted, and every thing he possessed he hated : he was, besides, a bel-esprit ; and if the world did not



always comprehend his witticisms, he, however, always had the satisfaction of hearing a loud laugh whenever he repeated them.

Arrived at his eighteenth year, the time was judged to be come when it was expedient that he should go in search of those splendid gems of knowledge and science, so abundantly culled in foreign countries by our travelled lords, baronets, and esquires.

And here, in pity to all exquisitely-sensible ladies, like Lady Paragon, who may have been, or will be, in a similar situation to hers, we pass over the inexplicable scene of tenderness that took place at parting, between Sir Bauble and his mamma.

## CHAP. XXIX.

*An Epitome of the Grand Tour, whose Truth and Correctness cannot be disputed, either by those who have or those who have not travelled it ; and worth its Weight in Gold to both Parties.*

AND now having embarked at Dover, behold Sir Bauble offering heart-rending libations to the god of waters, while Monsieur Frivole sits quietly by his bed-side, selecting from various authors, who have never perhaps left their chimney-corners, a manuscript list of such objects as are worthy admiration in the grand tour through which bear-leaders usually drag their cubs.

Being arrived at Paris, he produces, and delivers, his recommendatory letters ; and then begins the game of plundering the green-horn, by fawning him out of his cash on the part of the French, and by advising him out of it on the part of the

English whom he may there chance to meet with ; for such is their tenderness for their countrymen, that they never suffer any foreigner to spoil them without participating in the plunder.

And here money, the sure passport to seeming happiness, gained him many pretended friends; but, according to the fashion of those who have travelled before him, he took care that his companions were all those of his own country, on the same pursuits as himself, and who take this certain method of returning with the same idea as they set out, and a thorough abhorrence of those countries whose inhabitants they have never taken the pains to become acquainted with.

Not that it should be understood that any Englishman, who travels, ought to return dissatisfied with his own country ; nor, indeed, is it very possible he can ; but he ought not rashly to condemn, in their own country, from want of proper investigation into their manners and opinions, those very men whom he caresses as non-parcils in his own.

But

But let it not be said that Sir Bauble returned uninformed of foreign manners; he dipped carefully into the vices of every country through which he passed: at Paris he learnt that constancy in the marriage state is a visionary folly, impracticable, and attended with numerous inconveniences; he learnt also, that to cheat at play is a mistake when undiscovered, and not criminal when detected: but this information was dearly bought, being himself the party at whose expence the custom was exemplified.

He became a connoisseur at Rome, and stepped beyond all the virtuosos of the age, in happily attributing the graces of antiquity to new-modelled statues; and, what was still more agreeable to the Italian cognoscenti, paying lavishly for what he admired; he bought some undoubted pieces by Raphael; he stamped them with his own seal, and received them, on his return to London, with his seal unbroken: he had yet to learn, that it is not a less easy than common deceit, to have two paintings, of equal size, on the same nail; and for the

admiring stranger to fix the impress of his seal on the under one, a copy purposely there placed, while he sees not the deceit, and vainly thinks the original, which hangs outward, to be his purchase.

At Venice he spent the most money, and had the least amusement, except that of spending it, of any one at the Carnival.

In Holland, he learnt that to save is to get ; it was a lesson lost upon him : not so was his extravagance on those civilized amphibious ; for they cautioned him on his want of economy, while they scored his bills double, on the presumption of his liberal purse.

At length, he returned home, many would say, not much wiser than he went out ; but those who maintain to the contrary will not be in error : though, it is also a truth, that he might have gained equal knowledge, in as refined a degree, in his own country.

When Monsieur Frivole presented this model of perfection to the longing arms of Lady Paragon, he cried, " Ah, je lui ai  
donné

donné de l'instruction !—Je lui ai appris !”

In short, the sum of Monsieur Frivole's oration amounted to his having taught his pupil, that it was absurd for a two-legged animal, with S-I-R preceding his name, to deny himself any pleasure which he could afford to pay for : and as flattery is one of the most voluptuous feasts to a weak mind, Sir Bauble immediately gave a proof of his adherence to his tutor's excellent precept, by settling on him an annuity for life, as a security for a tid-bit of the same palatable dish whenever he should choose to call for it.

## CHAP. XXX.

*The Fall of a great Man, happily to rise again.*

THOUGH Sir Gilbert Oxmondeley did not rank amongst Lady Paragon's everybodies, nor she, in course, amongst his, yet they were well acquainted with the rank and circumstances of each other's families; and, having met at public places, were no strangers to each other's person.

Lady Paragon, on receiving the Baronet's note, which she three times perused ere she laid it out of her hand, could not restrain herself from conjecturing, that the stress laid on the words "particular business," signified by a black scratch drawn underneath them, was meant to imply, that Sir Gilbert intended to become a suitor for her hand; and flattered by the compliment intended her, though she did not instantly decide on accepting or refusing it, she immediately dispatched an elegant billet, wherein

wherein she expressed her anticipation of the pleasure and honour he intended her by his visit.

Lady Paragon was in her fifty-first year, and would have been reckoned a fine woman still, had she given nature its sway; but she was the victim, as she styled herself, of nervous sensibility. In reality, she was the slave of an extreme affectation, of delicate and fine feelings, which were strengthened so much by habit, as to become an almost necessary part of her existence.—Her dress was uniformly as elegant and studied as her manners, and she used her rouge with as much delicacy as her carpets, over which she moved in a style that gave an irresistible idea of her being fearful of giving them pain, if she trod upon them too heavily.

Sir Gilbert, on perusing the billët, which was written on vellum paper, within a stamped margin of myrtle sprigs supported at the corners by doves, felt an inward gratification, which most persons, however strenuous to conceal their feelings, experience



on the slightest supposed addition to their consequence.

The coach was ordered at the appointed hour; the best hammercloth decked the box, and Sir Gilbert and his horses were rigged in their most superb harness. The time being arrived, the baronet entered his box of state: "Drive to Lady Paragon's, G—— square," was the word; crack went the whip, and Sir Gilbert moved forward on his matrimonial embassy.

Now, to those who have never seen a lady of extreme sensibility in a scene of delicate confusion, it may be necessary to give some account of the manner in which Lady Paragon received the baronet.

Having habited herself in an elegant morning-dress, her rouge was carefully laid on, in imitation of a faint blush, and on a small pink hat she wore a deep veil, loosely turned up, that it might the more easily fall, as by accident, at any interesting moment.

When a loud knock at the door announced the first interesting moment to be near at hand,

hand, her ladyship, who was reclining on a sofa, once more moved to the glass, to assure herself that those charms which she thought irresistible were not faded; and having drawn a flowing ringlet of her auburn chignon into a situation of greater advantage, she regained her station on the sofa, from whence she was to rise in soft embarrassment at the entrance of Sir Gilbert; for all ladies in her situation agree, that it is the first sight which makes the strongest impression.

And now the door flew open, and Sir Gilbert Oxmondeley was announced. Lady Paragon started from her seat, and, with a panting breast and fluttering heart, stepped forward to meet her noble guest—and received him prostrate at her feet!—Never, from its first rise, had the house of Oxmondeley experienced so great a fall as at the present moment; for, the eyes of Sir Gilbert having entered the room long before his body, he perceived not a slight ascension into the apartment of his expecting goddess, which, impolitely falling at variance with

M 6

his

his toe, caused the unexpected and lamentable overthrow of his body.

Lady Paragon shrieked ; but having almost momentarily recovered from the surprise into which this droll occurrence had thrown her, she considered that this was a proper moment for giving a proof of her sensibility ; and, accordingly, having staggered backwards to the sofa, she sunk upon it, and began the hysteric kick and squall, by the different degrees of which fine ladies' feelings are usually rated.

The servant, who was still standing with the door in his hand, not having yet been able sufficiently to suppress his laughter for offering his assistance to Sir Gilbert, now ran to summon Lady Paragon's woman ; meanwhile the baronet, whose corpulency rendered him unable to raise himself on his feet without aid, had only just managed to turn himself on that part which nature designed for the rest of the body ; and being occupied in putting on his wig, which, in the unlucky tumble, had flown from his head, his appearance much resembled

bled that of a bear, who, for the amusement of the spectators at a country wake, holds upon his crown, with both his paws, the hat of his leader.

By the assiduities of her woman, Lady Paragon was quickly recovered; and John having ventured to come to the assistance of Sir Gilbert, whom he lifted into a chair, he and the female servant together left the room; and the door being closed, their risible organs began again powerfully to work.

A long-drawn sigh from Lady Paragon broke the silence; then raising a smelling-bottle to her nostrils, she said, "I hope you have received no injury, Sir Gilbert?"

"None, my lady; none, more than the surprise of the thing, as a body may say," returned the baronet, and a short pause ensued.—"I am come, my lady," Sir Gilbert continued—"I have waited upon you—I think, my lady, I have understood, that you are a widow?"

A square piece of cambric drawn from her ladyship's pocket, and raised to her  
averted

averted eye, was an answer in the affirmative to Sir Gilbert's question.

"You have, I think, my lady, a son, Sir Bauble Paragon, now on his travels?"

"I have, Sir Gilbert, and expect to see him in London within a fortnight."

"I hope he was well when you heard from him, my lady?"

"Thank you, Sir Gilbert, perfectly so; I anticipate his return with inexpressible delight;—I am told, travelling has given him improvements equal to my fondest expectations; his tutor speaks very highly indeed of his acquirements."

"Why, as to that, my lady, it does not require much learning to spend six thousand a year, my lady; but, I beg pardon, my lady, I may be under-rating his fortune."

"Very little, if at all, Sir Gilbert."

This was the very information Sir Gilbert wanted to gain, and nothing was now to be done but to open his mind.

"You may recollect, my lady," Sir Gilbert again began, "that my note specified a little particular business——"

This

This recollection was a matter of some importance, and the baronet, contrary to his usual custom, waited an answer before he proceeded ; it was given him by a slight inclination of the body on the part of Lady Paragon.

“ That business, my lady,” drawing his chair nearer to the sofa, “ is on a matrimonial subject, my lady.”

At these words the accommodating veil dropped.

“ I am worth, my lady, four thousand a year, unincumbered by debts or mortgages ; and I have a daughter, my lady, on whom I’ll settle twenty thousand pounds on the day she marries ; and as she is an only child, my lady, the remainder of my fortune will, of course, be hers at my death : so, if your ladyship’s son has an inclination for an English wife, at his return, she and her fortune are his ; and I assure you, he may go further and fare worse, for Bet’s a good girl, and a handsome girl, though I am her father.”

What a downfall to the air-built hopes of  
Lady

Lady Paragon was this unexpected declaration ! instead of offering her the title of wife, to tell in covered terms, that she was sufficiently ancient to become a grandmother !

However well skilled in every part of good breeding, her ladyship was by no means deficient in that most necessary art of concealing her feelings ; and accordingly, raising her veil, for which there was now no longer any occasion, or which vanity might now, perhaps, tempt her to lift, she thus addressed the baronet :

“ Upon my word, Sir Gilbert, this is a subject on which I can very ill undertake to speak for my son ; inclination should be the only guide in an affair of the heart, and, when Sir Bauble returns——”

“ You will tell him about Bet, and my money, and so on, my lady :—well, that’s fair.”

“ When my son returns, I certainly will mention your proposal to him ; and should he incline——”

“ True, my lady, true ; but as the young  
people

people are not acquainted, suppose we introduce them to one another as soon as we can ; if he don't like Bet, why there is no harm done after all : so, if your ladyship will fix a day for visiting us—"

" I leave town to-morrow, Sir Gilbert, for the feat of a friend in the vicinity of Dover, where I am to wait Sir Bauble's arrival from the continent ; but, on my return, I will with pleasure call on Miss Oxmondeley," returned Lady Paragon, who, perhaps, still entertained faint hopes of the baronet.

" As to a call, my lady, why that's nothing ; you must come and dine with us, and so on :—but more of that hereafter, as your ladyship says."

" You are very polite, Sir Gilbert."

" I suppose your ladyship will be back by Saturday se'nnight, or some time thereabouts ?"

" Most probably I shall, Sir Gilbert."

" I wish your ladyship a pleasant journey, and safe home, and beg my respectful compliments to Sir Bauble, though unknown."

" Present



“ Present mine, in return, to your daughter, if you please, Sir Gilbert.”

The coach was now ordered, and an admonition from Lady Paragon, to beware of the fatal step, ended this singular visit.

## CHAP. XXXI.

*How to preface an unpleasant Story.*

A WEEK had elapsed since the baronet's visit to Lady Paragon, and his daughter still remained in ignorance of his designs, when one morning, entering her dressing-room, he laid a small black box upon the table, and, seating himself, exclaimed, "There, Bet, look into that box, and see how you like what's in it."

Miss Oxmondeley immediately obeyed; and "Oh how beautiful!" instantly burst from her lips; for she beheld, reposing on their velvet cushion, three pins, and a pair of ear-rings, of the clearest diamonds.

"Aye, ain't they?" returned the baronet, "all of the first water, eleven hundred and fifty-nine pounds odd shillings' worth, and them I give to you; and, now, who says I ain't an indulgent father?"

"Thank you, thank you, my dear papa,"  
returned

returned Eliza, with her eyes riveted on the jewels.

"And now, what do I deserve in return for all this?" asked he.

"Oh, as many kisses as you please," cried she, and followed her words with the action she had named.

"There, there," said he, gently pushing her away, "let's see how long this fondness will last; sit down and tell me whether you remember what I once said to you about matrimony, in my study at Fairford."

"Yes," she replied, and her dejected manner plainly shewed she spoke the truth.

"Well, then, hold your tongue, and don't interrupt me till I've done, and you shall hear what I have been doing for your happiness." And here followed a detail of circumstances already laid before the reader.

The story concluded, "Well, Bet, what say you to all this?" was demanded on the part of the baronet.

"That the indulgence you have heretofore shown me, makes me feel your present cruelty the more severely," returned she.

"Cruelty!"

“ Cruelty !” reiterated Sir Gilbert in accents half choaked by surprise and choler—“ Cruelty !—Blood o’ my body, do you know the value of a titled man with six thousand a year ?—Six thousand a year, mind that, and a title—do you consider the worth of him ?—Lords increase fast enough, to be sure ; but, zounds, one would think that you supposed them as plentiful as shoe-blacks and link-boys, and that you might pick them up by dozens in the streets——”

“ I never thought on the matter at all, sir.”

“ Don’t be saucy, Bet—If he ’ll have you, marry him you shall, or—remember what I told you at Fairford.”

“ I suppose, sir, you ’ll permit me to see him before I decide on so material a subject ?”

“ Why, have not I decided without seeing him ?—answer me that.”

“ You are not to marry him, sir !” cried Miss Oxmondeley with energy.

“ No, but I’m to give him my money,” returned the baronet with equal emotion.

Miss Oxmondeley sighed, and turned aside her head.

“ I expect obedience from you, Bet,” continued the baronet, “ and I will have it, obtain it how I may.—Take the diamonds, they are nothing to what I intend to buy for you, if you please me : if you don’t—but you know my mind, so I say no more on the subject.—Here, there’s thirty guineas to buy you a dress for the Viscountess of Domino’s masquerade.” He laid down the money upon the table, and left the room.

Little need those who have ever felt the pains of a love-sick heart, or a mind overburthened by sorrow, to be told the consolation derived from spreading the tale of our woes on paper, or pouring them into an attentive ear. Eliza immediately flew to seek comfort in relating her sufferings to her friend Rachel.

They conversed long; but, alas ! conjecture and surmise produced only little hope, and many fears, and painted John Morden to the eyes of one party more fascinating than ever.

“ Let

“ Let us amuse the intermediate time between this hour and Sir Bauble’s introduction to you,” counselled Rachel, “ and suspend your farther judgment till you see him.”

“ If I had never seen John Morden,” returned Eliza, “ I might have borne him, as most fashionable wives do fashionable husbands. In his absence I could have enjoyed my own private pleasures, and either have rejoiced he was away, or not have thought of him at all ;—when present, I should have considered him as the necessary restraint that makes all women nominally their own mistresses :—but now, to be compelled to see him the usurper of my Morden’s rights, to have my heart and body under different command !—Oh, Heaven ! I shall go mad, Rachel ; I shall, indeed—perhaps to hear that he is married to another, and, oh ! perhaps bearing a commission !” At this idea she burst into tears.

The recollection of the diamonds first soothed her into moderation of her feelings,

and to what dress the thirty guineas devoted to adorning her person for the masquerade should be consigned, quite changed the tone of her passions.

She possessed some little of the substance of wit, besides a vast deal of its shadow; and in masquerades, where the tinsel of the tongue is so readily accepted instead of the pure metal, she had often shone to much advantage: thus, this added opportunity of signalizing herself, and acted, for the time it was in agitation, as the happiest Lethcan draught upon the remembrance of the hated marriage.

## CHAP. XXXII.

*An old Adage verified, which, lest any of our Readers should not immediately recollect, we will quote for their Accommodation—"No Fool like the old Fool."*

THE evening of the masquerade being arrived, Sir Gilbert sent up a message into the apartments of his daughter and Rachel, by their respective attendants, to request that they would step into his study, previous to their departure, that he might see their dresses.

Miss Oxmondeley was the first dressed, and the first who entered her father's study,—Of the character she meant to support, we will let Miss Oxmondeley speak for herself; of the manner in which she had habited it, we will say a few words.

Her entire drapery was of silver gauze, fastened round her waist by a cestus of silver roses, and thence descending to her



feet in folds sufficiently thin to display the symmetry of her limbs beneath ; on her left side a festoon of the same roses which composed her cestus, drew up her drapery above her ankle, and gave to view the shining sandals which bound her feet ; from her shoulders rose wings of pale blue tiffany streaked with silver ; and from her head, which was also bound with roses, descended a stream of the same material, which, crossing her drapery in front, fastened itself to the left side of her zone.

On her entering the room, " Why, what queen do you call yourself ? " exclaimed the baronet.

" A queen more enchanting than Venus, as far as imagination is allowed to have the superiority over reality in the degree of pleasure it gives," replied she ; " I am the queen of ideas—Fancy."

" Umph ! and what is to be your business at the masquerade—what are you to do ? "

" Every thing my imagination suggests, in order to sustain my character."

" I should

"I should be sorry to meet you there, being any other than who I am."

"I wish you would go with us," returned she.

"I'll tell you what, Bet, I never was at one in my life; but I don't say I would not go to-night, if I thought I could keep near you all the time, and hear you rattle them off."

"Beyond a doubt you might, fir, and unknown too; if you were to go in a domino, and not speak, nobody would know you."

"Why, as to that, I don't know but I'm as well qualified to speak as any body that goes; I have my understanding as free, and my lungs as sound, as any of my neighbours, and what's the reason I should not speak?"

"You misconceive me, fir; I meant, lest your voice should discover you."

"Well, and if it does, what then? I am Sir Gilbert Oxmondeley: and a mighty matter that, to be sure! Where's the man I have wronged, that I need be ashamed of being known by any body?—Somehow or

other you have raised my spirit ; and may this glass of wine (swallowing one as he spoke) be my poison, if I don't go, if I can get a dress!"

" A domino may easily be procured, fir."

" A domino ! fiddle-stick's-end of a domino ! I'll be something as well as other people—What do you think, now, if I could get a King Solomon's dress ? (he rose and rung the bell) : I'll send to Mrs. — what d'ye call her, in Oxford-street, and try."

" Scriptural characters are never represented at such places, fir ; suppose you sing ballads."

" Why, zounds ! do you mean to affront me ?—a baronet make a ballad-singer of himself !—You hold me at a high price, me-thinks."

" Pardon me, fir, you misconceive the thing quite ; at a masquerade, a man is not noted according to the eminence of the character he sustains, but the consistency with which he supports the one he undertakes :—it is the substance of the world at large

large entered in a room ; a mere picture of life."

"What, and no respect paid to rank ? it is a very false picture, I'm sure, then," cried the baronet.

A sultan was at length determined upon, the dress procured, Sir Gilbert equipped, and no man ever so pleased at seeing what nature had made passable, improved by art into intolerable folly, as the baronet was, when he took a survey of himself in the glass, after a mask, representing a handsome young man, which he had positively ordered to be brought him, was tied over his face.

Rachel's figure gained additional elegance from the simplicity of her dress ; she appeared as a novice, in virgin white and spotless purity.

Our party arrived at the viscountess's about half after twelve ; and as the lady of the house did not receive her guests as their entertainer, but mixed in the motley group, the humour of the masquerade began to them immediately on their entering the anti-apartment to the saloon.

"Charity for a poor pilgrim!" was the first sentence addressed to them.

"Must I give him any thing, Bet?" said the baronet in a whisper to his daughter.

"Answer him," replied Miss Oxmondeley in the same low voice.

"Don't be troublesome, don't be troublesome," cried the sublime sultan, with the air and tone of a parish overseer to a starving mendicant.

"Are you thus unfeelingly deaf to my solicitations," returned the pilgrim, contriving meanwhile to impede Sir Gilbert's progress, "because our persuasions differ? Charity is of no religion, but obtains a sure reward for all, and you shall have my prayers, though your faith be different from my own."

"Pshaw, nonsense, the old story!" cried Sir Gilbert. "Well, well, take that, and go about your business."—He put a shilling into the suppliant's hand, and pushed past him.

Miss Oxmondeley and Rachel had observed this scene with silence, but inward risibility;

rifibility ; they durst not admonish one so addicted to act in opposition to counsel ; thus, for their own sakes, they moved from his side, lest they should be made a part in his ridicule, while they trembled for the future events of the evening.

The first objects that attracted general attention, were a group of Savoyards and Savoyardes fantastically dressed, who entered the saloon dancing alemands, which they ended in a complicated figure, and then formed a circle round an elegant girl, who during their dance had played to them on a tambourin which she carried, and on their ceasing their mazy movements accompanied with her voice, in the following words, to a pleasing and irregular melody :

#### AIR.

FROM fair Savoy, behold me here,  
 Attracted by your jovial cheer ;  
 Then list to me, and you shall know,  
 How I live happy here below.  
 At sun-rise I swift to the mountains repair,  
 And to feed my young kids I ne'er fail ;  
 Then the udder I press, while my song rings in air,  
 As the new milk froths over my pail.

Thus merry passes on my life,  
 Exempt from discontent and strife;  
 Whether the wind blows low or high,  
 I ne'er complain, no, no, not I.  
 At eve, when the labours of day are all past,  
 And my kids once more clos'd in the fold;  
 Good humour presides at our humble repast,  
 All are gay from the young to the old.  
 Then altogether on the green,  
 The lads, and lasses, pleas'd are seen;  
 And in the merry dance all join,  
 While I beat on my tambourin.

At the close of her air she struck up a lively  
 tune on the bells of her instrument, to which  
 the feet of the dancers were instantly set in  
 motion to the exactest time; and they left the  
 saloon followed by general praise.

Eliza tripped up to an Indian leaning on  
 his spear, "How does this scene affect your  
 mind, warrior?" said she.

"To sigh for others that surpass it," he  
 replied.

"On the banks of the Ganges, or in the  
 wilds of the Esquimaux?" she asked.

"They are all superior," he answered,  
 "for the finger of Nature painted them,  
 and

and they please the heart; here Art is the designer, and he consults only the eye."

"Catch inspiration from my wand," said she, gently tapping him on the shoulder with it, "and form every scene to your own pleasure."

"First tell me the nature of the inspiration you would bestow, that I may judge whether it would be worthy my acceptance."

"I would warm thy imagination," replied she, "and teach thee to gather from the powers of Fancy, what reality will not bestow."

"And when the vision fades," replied the Indian, "what solace canst thou give me for its loss?"

"If the first draught was pleasurable," cried she, "repeat it; if not, drink at another basin of the same creative spring, and vary the powers of the medicine."

"Methinks I could bestow a recipe on the world, which would annihilate thy being," said the Indian.

"None, but the grave," returned Fancy.

"Oh, no! life in its happiest shape—home



and content.—I never had a vacancy in my mind into which fancy could enter, till I strayed from my Yarico; her idea is the only one which now fills the chasm, and when I return to her, it will again cease to be.”

“No, I deny it,” replied Eliza, “you will think of me—Fancy will haunt you, now you have once gained her acquaintance.”

“What! replied he, “divide the heart which belongs alone to my Yarico, between her and air!—lay by thy trade, and say a poor Indian taught thee constancy and honour.”

So saying, he turned from Eliza, and mixed in the crowd; she had found herself rather inferior to him in the contest of words, and while she was debating whether or not she should follow him, the sounds of “How do you do, Sir Gilbert Oxmondeley?”—“Sir Gilbert Oxmondeley, your servant!” and, “Your most obsequious, Sir Gilbert Oxmondeley!” struck her ear; she turned round, and perceived Sir Gilbert advancing towards her, attended by three Cantabs: he did not observe his daughter, and the same fear which

which had before drawn her from his side, made her again endeavour to escape him.—Sir Gilbert, who much liked to witness dancing, having been a performer of note, in his own opinion, in his youth, had stood with fixed attention upon the Savoyards during their exhibition, and no sooner was the dance over, and Sir Gilbert began to move about seeking fresh food for his eyes, than, “How do you do, Sir Gilbert Oxmondeley?—Sir Gilbert Oxmondeley, your servant!” and the like sentences, always including his name at full length, were addressed to him every step he took by some head or other which popped over one of his shoulders; and no sooner did he turn round on one side, than he had a call to the other by a voice speaking to him over the contrary shoulder. Imagining he was amongst his acquaintance, who had recognized either his voice or his gait, he for no inconsiderable time contented himself with answering to their inquiries, as, “Ah! I know Lady B.”—“I know you, my Lord M-- , though you are so fly;”—“Is it you, Miss P.?” and “Your servant again, Sir George R.”

according as he thought the voice, or laugh, or shape of the person corresponded with that of the one by whose name he addressed them; but at length he made an observation unpleasant to his feelings, which was, that not only the persons he addressed in return to their addressing him, for whose smile he found various modes of accounting, laughed, but there was always a burst behind him, turn which way he would.

At last, after much hurrying about from place to place, and receiving, without interruption, salutations similar to those already mentioned, unable to find his daughter by traversing the apartments, he seated himself on a bench by the wall, in the hope of seeing her pass that he might join her; as his end in coming to the masquerade had not yet been answered, in hearing "Bet rattle 'em off."

He sat some time: many of those who had before addressed him, now passed him, and either saw him not, or did not notice him, but he saw not Eliza; presently he arose, and approaching a haymaker who stood near him

him leaning on her rake, "Pray, my dear," said he, "have you seen the Fancy?"—"Why, it is behind your mightiness's back, like my bag of foot," answered a sweep who brushed between them; Sir Gilbert immediately turned round his head, and behind him stood the three Cantabs, whom Eliza had, to her surprise, heard addressing him in his own name.

"Pshaw," cried Sir Gilbert insensibly aloud on turning his head, "I meant my daughter."

"The offspring, doubtless, of thy most beloved Circassian—Am not I right, Sir Gilbert Oxmondeley?" said one.

"Where are your eunuchs, mighty sultan," cried another, "that they have not better guarded the lovely mahometan!"

"Thou art a miracle, Sultan of the Most Sublime Porte," said the third, "in being thus anxious about a daughter, where thou hast the beauty and variety of an harem around thee, to delight thine eyes."

"To whom is the envied handkerchief devoted, Sir Gilbert Oxmondeley?" said another;

other; "to whom will the desired prize of love be cast?"

"To the winner," cried Sir Gilbert, "if there is one to be played for, but it is the first time I have heard of it."

"Adieu, thou empty volume, bound in calf, and well lettered only on the back! I read no more of thee," cried one of the Cantabs.—"Adieu, most potent sultan, Sir Gilbert Oxmondeley," added the others; and they moved off, leaving the baronet puzzled, beyond his comprehension, why a sultan should be compared to a book.

Unable to move to his satisfaction in the crowd, and still unsuccessful in finding his daughter, he again placed himself on a seat similar to the one he had before occupied; and a domino sitting on either side of him, he enjoyed a few minutes of respite from the baiting of tongues.

Rachel, mean while, had passed through many adventures, not much less strange to her than those the baronet had experienced had been to him; but as her character required only innocent simplicity in its support,

port, she could not fail to sustain it to advantage.

She had just made obeisance to a lady abbess, who returned her salute with a haughty demeanour, when a Counsellor, in his gown and wig, and closely masked, advanced to her with these words, "I pity you, fair maid."

"I thank you for the interest you bestow on me," replied Rachel; "but I pray you, why, of all others, have I excited the passion of commiseration in your breast?"

"I pity you," replied he, "that you are passing through a state of trial, which will delude you into a vow of eternal imprisonment and misery."

"Oh, forbear!" returned Rachel; "you should not endeavour to render me discontented with the plan of life upon which I am about to enter, but rather strengthen my liking towards it, lest, after I have embraced it, I should not so well approve it as it becomes me to do, and I lay my sin partly upon you."

"But I would prevail with you to renounce the thought of seclusion from the pleasures

During supper, great part of the company unmasked, and after the repast appeared in different characters to those which they had before sustained. Amongst the few who did not take seats at the supper-table, Rachel remarked that the Counsellor was one, and, also, that he did not unmask. During supper he frequently approached Rachel, who kept on her mask, but did not address her; and she frequently observed him to take a glass from his pocket, and attentively examine, through it, Miss Oxmondeley, who had unmasked.

On their leaving the supper-room, the Counsellor again joined Rachel alone. "Am I forgiven?" he asked.

"You best know that," she answered.

"I have observed your terms," he replied.

"Then you have obtained their reward," she returned.

"How chilling is this answer to one who feels as I do!" he said: "prescribe to me," he continued, "another law on which I may obtain a greater boon;—forgiveness is so cold a word, tell me how I may warm it into love."

"You

" You repeat your error in the same breath in which you acknowledge the pardon you have already once obtained for it."

" Place my crime to the state of mind into which your charms have thrown me ; I would not meet you on unfair terms : I have seen your face, it has fired my soul ; behold mine !" he raised his mask an instant, and again replaced it.

His countenance was striking and handsome.

Rachel was silent.

" Have I inspired disgust ?" he asked.

Rachel was still silent.—" Is this vanity, or does he mean to act on honourable terms ?" thought she.

" Where do you live ;—where may I see you ?" he asked.

" You must excuse my informing you."—

" Still more presumptuous, I venture to ask your name ?"

" You must pardon me that, too."—

" For heaven's sake," cried he, " give me some clue, by which I may hereafter see you ; without some kind hint, some little information



information from you, we may never meet again—distracted in the thought !”

Rachel was silent; she knew not what to think, much less what to answer.

“ Do you hate me ?” he continued; “ say you do not abhor me.”

Rachel did not abhor him, but she wisely resolved not to confess that she did not.

“ You refuse to tell me your place of abode, and your name ?”—

“ I cannot, indeed.”

“ Will you consider whether you ever dare trust me with them ?—Let me augur your silence into a favourable omen—When, where shall I see you again ?”

“ Never, never !” replied Rachel hastily.

“ Have you a ticket for Lord Fritter’s masquerade next week ?”

“ I have.”

“ Will you go ?”

“ Perhaps I shall.”

“ You promise me to be there ?”

“ I make no promises.”

“ For God’s sake, go ; I cannot live out  
the

the time, if I am not certain of meeting you there."

"Well, I believe you will;" she was then going, he retained her hand, saying, "I cannot part with you, divine girl!"

"I see my party in search of me, and must go:"—she snatched back her hand, and left him.

"Treasure of my life, farewell!" he cried, and mixed with the crowd.

Rachel ran to Sir Gilbert and Miss Oxmondeley, whom she saw advancing towards her; and the carriage having been announced, they immediately entered it.

"If this be a masquerade," cried Sir Gilbert, as he seated himself in the coach, "Old Nick may take 'em all for me; its my first, and my last, I am resolved; nothing but beggars, and Jews, and ballad-fingers, and such trash: I thought to have seen all kings, and queens, and grandees: and then, forsooth, if they can catch at your name, 'gad they bandy it about till I don't know whether they don't almost make one ashamed of having one—and how they  
came

came to know my name, is what I cannot account for."

So saying, he threw himself into one corner of the carriage; and immediately starting forwards again, "Oh, zounds! damn it! what's that?" he exclaimed; "why there's a pin as long as a spit run into my back:" he instantly put his hand to the part affected, and again returning it, he cried, "What have we got here? a sheet of paper, I believe. Do, miss," addressing himself to Rachel, "hold this up to the front glass of the coach, and see if you can find out, by the light of the lamps, what it means."

Rachel complied with his request, and read on the paper, "Sir Gilbert Oxmondeley," in large letters.

Sir Gilbert groaned for five minutes before he could speak, and then swore for five more incoherently against "the performer of this abusive trick," as he termed it; at last, a little composed, he began—"So, then, this was what the fellow meant by calling me a calf book, lettered on the back;

back; lettered! yes, zounds, I was lettered with a vengeance! if it was a lord that had played me the trick, I'd have law of him, if there was law left to be had, if I could find him out. Why, zounds, I must have looked like one of the wooden dolls at a puppet-show, with a bill of the performance tied round my neck!" Here followed another chorus of oaths.

Miss Oxmondeley, who durst not, on this occasion, venture either to laugh or speak on the subject of this disturbance, and who could not forbear speaking at all, observed that the supper was very elegant.

"It was most beautifully arranged," said Rachel, "very pleasing and striking to the eye."

"Yes, and that was all I had of it," replied Sir Gilbert, "the fight was all I got, forsooth; there again I was fooled, as I deserved, for going into such a licensed open-doored bedlam—Egad, I was going to help myself to a leg of a chicken, and a fellow in long black robes, with a large grey beard, and a stick in his hand, came  
up

up to me, called me Sancho Panco, I think, told me he was my physician, and not a crumb must I touch, for the benefit of my health, I think he said; so all the fools round about laughed at me; and not a crumb of supper could I get, till they walked off again into the saloon, and then I was forced to eat fast enough to choak a horse, for the waiters were clearing off as quick as the company had done before."

Arrived at his own mansion, Sir Gilbert enjoyed the luxury of a bottle of wine and a pipe, by his own fire-side, to which he added the charms of slippers, a nightcap, and ungartered knees.

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supper-room next recurred to her; she was at a loss how to define them, whether to judge them the unguarded effects of the emotion with which he might be portraying his feelings, or the careless habits of libertinism: after much thought she believed and feared the latter; yes, gentle reader, she feared it;—but reprove neither her nor the author, that, though a heroine, she possessed, amidst her many virtues, an accidental foible; if blame be adjudged to her conduct, lay it to the charge of nature, which admits of no perfectness, particularly where the sudden impulse of ungovernable love tempts to err.

After a night of disturbed rest, Rachel arose to a morning of greater composure: “I will drive his idea from my mind,” she exclaimed; “of how inexcusable a folly have my thoughts, this night, been guilty! a man, too, unknown to me, whose face I have never but once seen, and then scarcely for a single minute;—would I had never seen it!” She caught her tongue on the relapse into folly, and checked it. “I will never think of him again;” this was a  
harsh

harsh resolution; she softened it—"unless he should be the man I could wish in principle, as well as person, and should seek me on honour——oh, no, impossible! impossible! who am I?—no one—born of no one—belonging to no one: should he inquire after me, should I ever see him again, he must despise me!—he must, he must!—I will never think of him again;" and she hurried down into the breakfast apartment.

During breakfast, the conversation naturally turned on the preceding evening; but Rachel forbore to mention to Miss Oxmondeley the discourse of the counsellor, which she considered as the first step towards suppressing its recollection in her mind. Miss Oxmondeley, on her part, recounted many similar adventures which had befallen her; and the carelessness with which she spoke of them, assisted Rachel's predetermination of thinking lightly of her's.

In the middle of breakfast, in bolted Sir Gilbert, with his arch-fiend Blackman at his elbow. The man of law seldom visited the baronet, except at one particular hour,



which was immediately after dinner; and his appearance, at this time, excited a surprize in Miss Oxmondeley, which she could not forbear connecting with ideas unpleasant to her own feelings.

“ Well, Bet, what do you think ?” cried Sir Gilbert, with inward joy and exultation.

“ Of what, sir ?” asked she, with an unchanged countenance.

“ Pshaw !” replied the baronet, “ you are always as cool as a cucumber when any thing twitters me ;—you can be hot enough when I want you to be otherwise ; but, however, don’t let us quarrel : you could not tell what had brisked me up, but now you shall hear—Sir Bauble Paragon is arrived.”

“ Yes, ma’am, yes,” added Blackman, who had hitherto been employed in acting pantomimic grimaces, to the effect of Sir Gilbert’s words—“ Sir Bauble arrived in town some part of yesterday ; I had it from his own gentleman.—When he reached England I did not think to ask, but I am happy to say, I hear he is in excellent health and spirits.”

Eliza,

Eliza, who had during the two last speeches not raised her eyes above the saucer from which she was sipping her tea, at the conclusion of them, drew Rachel's cup towards her, with the sentence of, "Will you have any more coffee, my dear?" languidly expressed.

"Let the sloop alone, and listen to matters of consequence, can't you?" cried Sir Gilbert.

"I can use the senses of taste and hearing at one time, sir, without their jarring," replied she.

"It is impossible you can be eating, and drinking, and pay the attention you ought to what we are going to talk about.—Sit down, Blackman, sit down;—stay, give me that chair, and get another for yourself."

"You anticipated my intention, Sir Gilbert," grinned Blackman, and then placed himself a chair behind the tea-table, for fear of keeping the fire from the ladies, as he politely gave them to understand.

"Never mind them, never mind them," cried Sir Gilbert, "come closer to me, I tell you:" on matters of importance he could never speak to his own satisfaction, unless

he could touch the wrist, button, or knee of the person with whom he conversed.

“The ladies will, I hope, excuse my obeying Sir Gilbert,” said the polite lawyer, with a bow to each; the first to Miss Oxmondeley, who turned aside her head with a contemptuous sneer; the second to Rachel, who slightly returned it; and then placed his chair in the situation commanded him by the baronet.

Sir Gilbert laid his hand on Blackman's knee; and, with every nerve in agitation, began the conversation by saying, “In the first place, Blackman, are you quite sure he is come?”

“Oh, dear, yes; oh, dear, yes, Sir Gilbert; my business was on purpose to inform you—thought you would like to know on account of many little-forma——”

“Ay, ay, we shall come to them by and by.—But, in the first place,” again repeated the baronet, “what am I to do?—should I send to know how he does after his journey?”

“If I might take upon me to advise—but counsel from me is presumptuous——”

“Go

"Goon, goon, and make no compliments."

"I should recommend your calling in person."

"Oh, ay, and take Bet along with me, eh?"

"No, I—no, I—that is," replied Blackman, looking alternately at the father and daughter to catch his cue on either side, and, if possible, please both, "etiquette does not require that."

"No!—How then—must I ask him to come and see her?"

"You may warmly acquiesce, when he makes the proposition of visiting Miss Oxmondeley," replied Blackman.

"Well, well, but if I go and call in, and we sit talking about politics, and foreign parts, won't it appear very odd that I say nothing about my daughter, after having—— Don't rattle the cups and saucers so, Bet, I can hardly tell what I am saying or doing, you make such a clattering and a noise.—Where was I?—Oh, that I say nothing about my daughter, after having offered her to him by means of his mother, Lady Paragon, before."

“ Oh, no,” replied Blackman, “ oh, no ; he will of course introduce the subject himself ; or you may refresh his memory, by reverting to the visit you had the honour of paying Lady Paragon ; added to which a slight bow of your head, and a significant smile, with ‘ Your ladyship recollects,’ addressed to Lady Paragon, will be a sufficient introduction to the subject on your part.”

“ Very well, very well,” cried the baronet ; “ I hope I shall find him at home alone, because it would be awkward giving such a kind of hint before strangers, because he could not return it ; indeed, you know it would not be right, without we whispered, and that might seem odd and impolite—No, if there is any body there, I’ll tell you how it must be, I must give him a significant hint at coming away, that I shall hope to see him soon, or something of that kind, that he may not think I am neglectful ;—or else, I’ll tell you what, I must sit the company out—one of the two.”

“ Which the occasion itself will best determine,” said Blackman.

“ Well,

“ Well, then, so let it be,” exclaimed the baronet; “ and as it is not far off two o’clock, I suppose I had better be going; so, Blackman, ring the bell, and order my coach to the door immediately, and meanwhile I’ll step and put on my coat and wig, and buckle my shoes.”—Blackman rang the bell, and Sir Gilbert left the room, but suddenly returning, “ Be sure you don’t go away till I come back; do you hear, Blackman?” he said.

“ By no means, by no means, certainly not,” returned the lawyer, and Sir Gilbert again left the apartment.

That Blackman’s situation on being left alone with Miss Oxmondeley (for Rachel was, in this case, a cypher), at this critical juncture, which he seemed to have been producing, and to which the lady’s countenance plainly shewed her abhorrence, was far from being pleasant, may readily be conceived.

No sooner was Sir Gilbert gone, than Miss Oxmondeley began a titter of contempt, which she pretended to hide behind

a book that she held in her hand, but at a sufficient distance from her face, for the object of her derision to be able very plainly to perceive what was passing in her features.

Blackman's system was politeness, and an aim at making himself agreeable; the first forbade him to resume his seat unasked, and the second taught him to relate a bit of news which might prove acceptable to the ladies.—For some moments he stood before the fire, and many hems produced the following sentence:

"I suppose you have heard, Miss Oxmondeley, that every thing is settled, Miss Oxmondeley, between Sir Charles Evergreen and Lady Barbara Garnet, Miss Oxmondeley?"

"Ho!" replied the lady addressed:

A short pause ensued.

"The honourable Mrs. Gordon died yesterday about noon, leaves an immense property to her son-in-law, Miss Oxmondeley."

"Ho!"

A pause.

"Well, Miss Oxmondeley, Sir Joyce Joyce has a son and heir to his estate at last, Miss Oxmondeley."

"Ho!"

A pause.

"I suppose it is old news to you, Miss Oxmondeley, that Captain Dugard and Miss Flight are returned from Gretna-green?"

"Ho!"

A pause.

"Another match is spoken of, that I think will a little surprise you, Miss Oxmondeley; Miss Blower, from the city, it is whispered, will be lady Q. ere long."

"Pray, sir," said Miss Oxmondeley, "for what paper do you collect the list of births, deaths, and marriages, because you might spare your lungs a deal of unnecessary exercise by recommending me to it, for the information you now put yourself to the trouble of giving me from memory?"

"Ma'am!—Miss Oxmondeley!—I don't comprehend—I beg pardon—I——"

"Ay, ay, it may be prudent to conceal,



under what name you libel truth; I forgot that, Mr. Blackman."

Blackman was settling his ruffles, and preparing to reply, when a servant announced Lady Varny.

Lady Varny entered; and after the first How d'ye's, "I'll thank you, Mr. —" said Miss Oxmondeley, turning to Blackman, "if you'll wait for my father in his study; I'm engaged at present, and must reserve the mortuary list to enliven a future opportunity."

Blackman bowed, and retired; but his most strained efforts could not raise the smirk with which he usually accompanied his bow on leaving or entering an apartment.

Lady Varny was come, she said, to beg the attendance of Miss Oxmondeley and her friend at the theatre that evening; a new farce was to be performed, written by a friend of her's, and she had promised to support it; she had taken nearly a hundred places in the house, but she had reserved them two seats in her own box.

The

The invitation Miss Oxmondeley thought was of that nature that she could not, consistently with politeness, refuse it; and accordingly promised to attend Lady Varny; who having, as she said, a thousand more particular friends to call upon and solicit their interest, besides the poor author to visit and console, immediately departed on obtaining the grant of her request.

The door had scarcely been shut upon Lady Varny five minutes, before it again opened, and introduced Sir Gilbert, already returned; "Where's Blackman?" he cried, casting his eyes round the room.

"In your study, I believe, Sir Gilbert," replied Rachel; "I'll call him in."

"Do, miss, do." Rachel went in search of the lawyer; and Sir Gilbert traversed the apartment in silence till Mr. Blackman entered, when he exclaimed, "Well, Blackman, here am I home again!" Of this Blackman had ocular and auricular demonstration; thus could only bow in answer to Sir Gilbert's exclamation.—"I went too early, I fancy," continued the baronet, "and yet

it was almost three o'clock.—I suppose it would not be right to go twice in one day, or I could call again an hour hence?"

"By no means, if you left your card, Sir Gilbert," said Blackman.

"Why, yes, I left a card;—I'll tell you how it was: when the man that opened the door said, 'Not at home,' I thought I could see a lie in his face: so I called out, 'Here,' says I, 'show your master that card, I can almost say for certain he'll be at home to me;' and so I thought I could, you know, —'I've orders to say not at home to any body,' returned the fellow, and took the card and shut the door; and so what could I do but drive home?"

"Oh certainly, certainly, Sir Gilbert.—Sir Bauble will now return your call."

"Aye, but if he only leaves a card in return for mine, how shall we ever get acquainted, so as to come to the point in question?—I'll tell you how I'll manage," continued the baronet, after a few moments consideration: I'll tell my servants to be sure, if Sir Bauble Paragon calls, to let him  
 know

know I am at home, whether he asks to come in or not ; and I'll not go out in a morning till he has been."

The council-chamber then broke up: the ladies went to dress; Sir Gilbert to recruit with a nap, after the fatigue of talking and planning; and Blackman to his office, to learn what chance of fees the morning had produced him.

## CHAP. XXXIV.

*An unexpected Rencontre.*

IN the evening Miss Oxmondeley and Rachel called upon Lady Varny, and took her with them to the theatre in Sir Gilbert's carriage.

They did not enter till the third act was nearly concluded, but their places had been reserved for them by some of Lady Varny's male friends, who resigned them on the entrance of the ladies into the box.

The play was the *Heiress*, and much did Rachel regret her having lost the prior scenes, in which the inimitable representative of Lady Emily had been engaged.

At the conclusion of the comedy, when anxiety for the commencement of the piece, whose fate was that night to be decided, sat on every tongue and brow, Rachel, in casting her eyes round upon the company in the boxes, discovered the countenance of the  
preceding.

preceding evening's counsellor ; he was in the third tier of boxes, and with his face close to the cheek, and his head rested upon the shoulder, of a woman, whose dress and situation spoke little in favour of her reputation.

Rachel turned away her eyes in disgust at the object which had met them, and in still greater anger at herself for having ever given a serious thought to his recollection.

She turned to Lady Varny, and joined with her in the conversation which was employing the entire party round her.

Presently the bell rang for the prologue, and it went off pretty smoothly.

A short vacancy ensued, and she could not forbear casting her eyes once more to the spot where she had seen the counsellor. He was gone : she wondered whether he had observed her : the bell again rang, and she turned her thoughts to the stage.

The first act went off without much interruption, save the ill-timed, unceasing, and reiterated plaudits of Lady Varny and her party : the first scene of the second act  
gave

gave offence, which called forth all the efforts of the author's friends to quell ; and the introduction of the skeleton of a murdered noble in the second, who rose to point out to his heir the chest that contained his will, drew forth a clamour, which, notwithstanding the efforts of united friends, left the Noes predominant. The fury of the Ayes was raised almost to madness ; the Noes were resolute ; and a general uproar ensued. Shrieks, oaths, fire, murder, and every other sound of alarm, chorussed by the smashing of the lamps about the theatre, now mingled on the ear. " Oh, for heaven's sake, let us make our way into the lobby ! " cried Miss Oxmondeley, snatching hold of Rachel's arm, " the house will be pulled down about our ears, and we shall be killed ! "

They together left the box ; and, having once arrived on its outside, they had no farther trouble on moving forward, nor power to retard their own progress, they were, in an instant, hemmed in by the crowd, and by it carried along. " Oh, what will become of us ! what will become of us ! we shall

be

be crushed to death!—Oh, that I could see somebody I knew!—Oh, that we had somebody to protect us!” cried incessantly Miss Oxmondeley.

In a few moments Rachel observed the young counsellor forcing his way through the crowd, in the contrary direction to that in which they were constrained to move, and imagining that he was coming to give her his assistance, which the terror of the time being made her ready to accept, forgetful of the past and future; she exclaimed, “ Oh, thank heaven, here comes somebody !”

“ Who?—where?—who?” cried Miss Oxmondeley, casting her eyes round on all sides.

“ There, there” replied Rachel, signaling to the spot where she had the moment before seen the counsellor; but in the moment that she had turned her eye towards Eliza to guide her sight to the spot where she had seen him, he had disappeared.

Miss Oxmondeley looked towards the spot pointed out to her, and before Rachel had time to say that the person to whom she

she



she had alluded was gone—"John Morden!" exclaimed Miss Oxmondeley.—John Morden was the next moment by their side, and Rachel spared a most perplexing explanation.

"Dear Mr. Morden, assist us, help us out of this terrible place—Dear Mr. Morden, help us out!" continued Eliza.

"Rachel! Miss Oxmondeley!" said he, "don't be alarmed, follow me, the crowd is all going one way, and you may get out without much difficulty."

"Oh, how fortunate our meeting with you, Mr. Morden," answered Eliza. "I am sure you will protect us! how fortunate this rencontre!"

Miss Oxmondeley thus happy, and Rachel contented, they followed their guide into the outer lobby. Here a fresh affray was causing a new alarm: a gentleman who had lost his watch had seized on an innocent person, and charged him with the theft: the friends of the accused had come to his assistance, and a fight, unsuccessful in event to the mistaken gentleman, was passing.

Alas!

Alas ! the irresistible rush of spectators who were crowding to the scene of action, parted the ladies from their protector.

A few instants released them from their present terror; for, Rachel's eyes happening to fall on one of Sir Gilbert's footmen, she soon contrived to make him see her; and, by his means, they quickly arrived at the carriage.

Immediately on entering it, Miss Oxmondeley began to mingle opposites with the usual inconsistency of romantic ladies in love. How happy was she in having seen Mr. John Morden ! How unfortunate that they had been separated before scarce a single sentence had been uttered by either of them ! How charmed she was at his being in London ! How distressed that she dared not ask him to her father's house ! How delightful a turn his sight had given to her drooping spirits ! How melancholy a reflection rested upon her mind in drawing a comparison between him and the idea she had formed of Sir Bauble Paragon !

Miss Oxmondeley's surprise, on seeing.

John

John Morden in London, was not so great as may be supposed, Mr. Morden having, in his last letter to Rachel, mentioned to her that John was in a very short time to come to town, in order to walk the hospitals; which circumstance she had, of course, communicated to Eliza.

All the evening Miss Oxmondeley talked of John Morden; all the night she thought of him: and, in the morning, she could scarcely refrain from crying for him, when the following note was delivered to her father: "Lady Paragon and Sir Bauble Paragon intend themselves the honour of calling upon Sir Gilbert and Miss Oxmondeley this morning, at three o'clock, if perfectly agreeable to them."

The baronet wrote in answer "Sir Gilbert and Miss Oxmondeley will have a great deal of pleasure and happiness in receiving Lady Paragon and Sir Bauble Paragon at the time appointed by them for visiting them."

Mr. Blackman was immediately sent for: he arrived with all expedition, and was scarcely

scarcely allowed by Sir Gilbert to enter the room before he exclaimed, " Well, Blackman, it will be as sure as a gun! he'll have Bet, or I'm no baronet! Read that, read that!"—He then put the note he had a short time before received into the lawyer's hand, which while he was reading, Sir Gilbert kept ejaculating without intermission—" Eh?—well?—ain't I right?—eh?—what do you think?—well?"

" Quite glad, quite happy to see this," returned Blackman. " I think, as I may say, it is proof pos. in the affirmative; at least I hope so. It has my best wishes however; my very best wishes."

" And mine," returned the baronet—" come of it what may, all bids fair to be settled as I could wish ere long. There's only one thing I am afraid of."

" What can that be, Sir Gilbert?—what possible circumstance do you allude to?"

" Why Bet is what I am afraid of. I know it goes against her grain to marry Sir Bauble; and what provokes me is, that it  
can

can be only a foolish prejudice that makes her dislike the match, because it is of my making up: it can be no aversion to the man, because she has never seen him."

"Pardon me, Sir Gilbert, may it not arise from a predilection in another quarter?—Pardon me."

"That's what I should like to find out: not that it would make me alter a pin's point of my resolution; but if I thought she cared about any fellow I did not approve, I'd soon wean her mind from him."

"A difficult matter to be effected, Sir Gilbert; but I doubt not that your knowledge of the world might accomplish it."

"An easy matter enough," replied the baronet. "I'd intercept her letters if I thought she corresponded with any body; and then, after she had been fretting for a few weeks that he did not write to her, and moping because he neglected her, I'd get it inserted in two or three newspapers that he was married to somebody else; and vanity would drive him out of her head at once."

The man of law gave applause to Sir Gilbert's

Gilbert's honourable and ready genius of invention, and added, "that he had rather see another marriage he could mention, in print; and that he hoped, if there ever had been any cause to suppose the carrying of the plan Sir Gilbert had just mentioned into effect necessary, the lady's sense of her duty, and of the gratitude she owed to so indulgent and provident a parent as Sir Gilbert, would convert her mind from any unworthy object to the obedience due to her kind father."

"Time's the great prover of events," half sighed out the baronet; "but I can never believe but she's brewing some plot or other to avoid marrying the man I have chosen for her, or she would never take all that's going forward now so coolly as she does, after having upbraided me about my cruelty, as she called it, and talked such nonsense as she did to me, when I first told her of the match;—no! no!—However, there's no law can make her my master, that's one thing; and my mind's made up about marrying her, that's another; so I am easy."

After some more debates, of a similar nature, had been ended in an equally conclusive manner, by the nervous arguments of the baronet, and the warm coincidence of the lawyer in his opinion, be it what it might, and which the baronet looked upon as a conviction of its always being a true one, Blackman departed, and Mrs. Coke was ordered into the presence-chamber. The baronet informed her he wanted something very nice cooked up, for some very elegant company he expected that morning, by way of whet; and Mrs. Coke having planned some little refreshments, departed the room, with orders to send in the butler. The butler likewise received information that Sir Gilbert expected some very elegant company that morning; "one of the first young men in London," specified the baronet, with a look that stamped the visitor's consequence upon the mind of the butler; and that the refreshments then preparing by Mrs. Coke must be handed in eight or ten minutes after his arrival.—The two footmen were next ordered to wear their best suits, and to station

station themselves in the hall against the hour the noble visitor was expected.—Lastly, Eliza was ordered to be elegantly dressed, to receive Lady Paragon and her son, in the best drawing-room, and Rachel to be with her as her friend.

Matters thus arranged, the baronet proceeded to his study, to put on his full-bottomed tie-wig and fringed cravat, singing as he moved along, “Will you marry me, dear Ally, Ally Croker?” the enlivening effects of which upon his spirits, ripe for any impression of pleasure, would scarcely allow him to move his legs along the passage in modest gait.



## CHAP. XXXV.

*Joy and Fear—Surprise and Anger—Ash-  
nishment and Contempt.*

**S**IR Gilbert was in the drawing-room two hours sooner than his honourable company were expected, and his daughter and Rachel soon after joined him.

They had not been many minutes assembled, when Lady Varny was announced.

“Well, my dear creatures, how do you do?” she exclaimed, on entering: “I was in a thousand frights about you, till I heard you were got safe home, as you may suppose.”

“Why?—when?—where?—what’s been the matter?” cried Sir Gilbert.

“At the theatre last night, when my friend’s piece was so unfavourably received,” returned she.—“I am persuaded it was merely prejudice against him that condemned it; I thought it was one of the prettiest

prettiest things I had ever heard: but we don't despair of bringing it forward yet:—at all events he'll print it; and if he does not write an explanatory preface, including some circumstances I shall advise him to mention, I must say he is to blame, and so I have been telling him this morning.—In the riot that took place, I was parted from your daughter and her friend/”

“ We very soon happened to meet with one of my father's servants,” said Miss Oxmondeley, “ and, by his means, reached our carriage in safety, though not without being much incommoded in our passage to it.”

“ Ah! it must be confessed,” replied Sir Gilbert, “ that a fashionable mob is not much more mannerly than a vulgar one; I always think it is a good thing when one gets out of them without being robbed or maimed.”

“ I lost my watch and a pearl pin, besides having my fingers bruised in the joint of a box-door,” yawned Lady Varny; “ I am now going to have them inquired af-

ter : I have a friend in the city, who knows a man, whose wife has a relation, that has some knowledge of a person who is sometimes able to gain information of stolen goods, for a handsome perquisite : but don't speak of him—I would not have it mentioned for the world ; I promised secrecy to my friend.—Adieu, excuse me ; every quarter of an hour is of consequence in an inquiry of this kind—They send a vast number of stolen trinkets to America, I am told.—I am glad to see you safe and well after the fright ; my nerves are all in a flutter yet.—Good morning, my loves ! Sir Gilbert, yours ! It's very rude to run away in such a hurry, but you'll excuse me ;—I see you are going to have company.—Adieu——”

“ Yes, we expect Lady Paragon, and her son Sir Bauble,” cried the baronet ; but Lady Varny was on the stairs before the two first words of his sentence were uttered.—“ I should like that woman a great deal better, if she cared to hear any body talk but herself,” continued sir Gilbert,

bert,

Bert, disappointed at not being listened to in return for having lent his ear, especially when he wanted to relate information to her of so great importance: he went on; "she talks fast enough for her breath to work a windmill.—What was all this work at the play-house last night, Bêt?"

Miss Oxmondeley answered, in as light terms and with as little emphasis as possible, that Rachel and herself had been parted about a couple of minutes from Lady Varny in leaving the house, but had incurred no material inconvenience or fright.

"Did you meet with none of your acquaintance to hand you out?" inquired the baronet.

"Oh, sir! we managed vastly well without," returned Miss Oxmondeley, whilst Rachel and she exchanged silent looks of eloquence.

After some time passed in silence, the baronet pulled out his watch, "Bless my soul, only ten minutes past two o'clock! my watch must have lost—" he put it to his

ear—"It goes now," he continued, "but it must have lost in the night.—How is yours, Bet?"

"It does not go, sir."

"Then where's the use of its dangling by your side?—Mine must be wrong, I'm certain; it must be on the stroke of three o'clock."—He rang the bell, a servant entered—"Sam, how much does it want of three o'clock by your watch?"

"It is only seven minutes after two, Sir Gilbert."

"Phoo, it must be later; go and see how it is by the time-piece in the kitchen.—

"Servants' watches are always behind-hand, it suits their motions," continued the baronet when Sam left the room.

"It is only five minutes past by the time-piece, Sir Gilbert," said the servant, returning.

"Past three?" he eagerly asked.

"No, two, Sir Gilbert."

"Pshaw, all the watches and clocks in the house are too late by the fun—they must be—I'll have them regulated either  
this

this afternoon, or to-morrow morning—  
Mind the man is sent for, do you hear?”

“Yes, Sir Gilbert,” replied Sam, and left the room.

Again Sir Gilbert put the watch to his ear, heaved an inward sigh, returned it to his pocket, and then began to traverse the apartment, stopping at the sound of every carriage, in the hope of hearing it cease opposite to his door, and looking anxiously at every turn out of the window, which commanded a view of the square.

Presently a loud knock at the door gave a turn to the agitation of Sir Gilbert's spirits; and the electrical shock which the sound had produced on him having driven from his thoughts the consideration of its not having been preceded by the rattle of a carriage, he exclaimed, “Here they come!—get to your places—here they come.—Now mind—pray mind—” but the opening of the door prevented him from finishing his injunction, and advancing towards it with a low bow he received—John Mor-

“Most prodigiously happy——” the baronet had uttered before he perceived whom he was addressing, when, raising his eyes to his guest, he stopped short and stared, with unaffected surprise, in his visitor’s face.

The face of Sir Gilbert was capable of so little expression, that, except the inflation of his cheeks in moments of violent anger, his features were unable to describe what passed within his breast. Surprise, disappointment, and the recollection of a former unexpected meeting between the parties, never to be forgotten, though forgiven, which the present unfortunately-timed visit did not tend to soften, rendered the baronet some moments motionless and dumb. John Morden, who had heard the words Sir Gilbert had uttered, and had seen them accompanied by a most profound bow, and who being entirely ignorant of Sir Gilbert’s averseness to his visiting his house in the country, as also of his daughter’s predilection for him, supposing he must be graciously received as an intimate  
of

of Rachel's, particularly after having aimed at rendering a service to her and Miss Oxmondeley the preceding evening, with a polite and familiar ease addressed the party assembled in turns with the usual inquiries of health, and then proceeded to express his regret at having been divided from them the preceding evening, and his anxiety at not having been able again to find and give them his assistance; adding, "that he could not refuse himself the liberty of making an inquiry in person after their safety that morning."

Miss Oxmondeley blushed, flammered, and followed Rachel through a speech of thanks.

Sir Gilbert had these few moments for reflection, and thus ran his thoughts:—  
 "My daughter was always desirous of having this young fellow at Fairford.—When there, he and she walked away from the party alone;—she hates Sir Bauble, without knowing him, and gives no reason why;—this chap was with her in the riot last night, and she did not mention to me that



she had seen him ;—she coloured as red as fire when he entered the room ;—she trembles, and avoids meeting my eye, now he is speaking to her.”—The conclusion drawn from these reflections consequently was, that John Morden must be his daughter’s favoured lover.

“ You were with my daughter, then, last night at the play, sir,” said the baronet.

John Morden answered by a description of their rencontre, as it had occurred to him ; and added, that his anxiety had since been extreme from the apprehension of what they might have suffered after he lost them.

The baronet felt conscious that he ought to thank his visitor for his civility ; but his extending cheeks refused to assist his utterance, and he replied by a hasty inclination of the head.

The parties remained standing some moments in silence, as they had risen to receive John Morden.—Rachel could not ask him to sit in a house where she was only a visitor herself, with its owner present ; Miss Oxmondeley

mondeley durst not, and Sir Gilbert would not.

After some minutes thus passed in visible confusion to all, Rachel made some inquiries relative to her friends at Hilden; "When was Emily to be married?" she asked.

"Not till the spring," John Morden believed.

"Did they intend residing at Hilden after their marriage?"

John Morden replied, "that he imagined not, as Mr. Eringham had talked much of going into the army."

"I approve his plan," cried Eliza with a sigh; "were I Miss Morden, this resolution would greatly enhance to me the value of a man I meant to make my husband.— In my opinion, as far as there can be any pre-eminence in the superior ranks of society, the army indisputably claim it, as men and gentlemen;" again she sighed, and seated herself.

The blood flushed into John Morden's face, and he inwardly cursed the fates that had prevented his wearing regimentals.

"A soldier

"A foldier then is my daughter's taste," thought the baronet; "this young fellow was bound 'prentice to a surgeon—I may be mistaken in my opinion of his being her favoured swain."—Thought paused a moment:—"But I may also be mistaken in regard to his profession. Has he a cockade in his hat?"—The hat was a round one, and defied inquiry.—"I'll ask him what he is," next thought the baronet—"If he is a soldier, he'll hardly deny it."

Sir Gilbert advanced a step or two towards John Morden, and calling up a loud hem, and look of imagined consequence, by which he meant to awe him into feeling his own insignificancy—"You are bred up an apothecary, I think, sir?" he said.

"Yes, Sir Gilbert," replied John; "I am at present, certainly, handling the pestle and phials, in compliance with the positive will of my father, but I live in the hope that the reward of my physical labours will be the change of my profession, to a more honourable one, before I die."

"Hum," replied the baronet, a monosyllable

syllable whose copious signification and frequent use with the baronet have been already explained.

Sir Gilbert took the turn of the room; his thoughts again busy.—“ Here’s a plot brewing against the honour of my family—a fellow without a name, or a fortune, trying to ensnare the affections of my daughter, from a title, and a mint of money, by holding out the lure of a sword and cockade;—and I dare not turn the rascal out of my house, because I have no proof against him—Yes! yes! I thought it would turn out that he meant to be of a more honourable profession before he died;—wish, from my soul, he was dead now, if it was no sin to wish it.”

Rachel had, meanwhile, seated herself on a stool in the window, and John Morden had placed himself by her, and began to converse alternately with her and Miss Oxmondeley on the common-place subjects of the day.

Sir Gilbert continued to traverse the room, one only thought affording him consolation, and he thus expressed it to himself: “ It is your first, and it shall be your last; visit

in

in this house, Captain Gallipot, I can assure you."—An idea which has afforded an indescribable pleasure to many a narrow mind before Sir Gilbert's.—Few need be told the triumph such a mind enjoys in bestowing silent invectives on those it hates, but dares not openly condemn.

Presently the door of the room opened, and the refreshments which had been prepared, in Sir Gilbert's phrase, "for one of the first young men in London," were brought in, and offered to John Morden.

The baronet groaned, ground his teeth, and blew out his cheeks almost to bursting; he longed to vent his rage on every one present; pride forbade him to expose his passion before the stranger, and he contented himself with nipping his chin between the second joint of his forefinger and thumb.

John Morden partook carelessly of what was handed to him.

When the servants left the room, Sir Gilbert followed them to the door, under pretence of shutting it after them; and, in a low voice, he growled out to the last,

"Damned

"Damned stupid rascals! what did you bring in the things for without being bid?"

In a few minutes John Morden rose to depart; and scarcely had he made his retiring bow, when Lady Paragon's carriage stopped.

The instant John disappeared, Sir Gilbert turned to his daughter, "I have found you out, Madam Bet!" he exclaimed, "I have found you out—these are your tricks—these are your ways, are they?"—the door opened—"If you don't behave to my mind now, I disown you for ever," he added, and then stepped forward to receive his guests.

Lady Paragon entered first, in an elegant morning dress; she was introduced by Sir Gilbert to his daughter: Sir Bauble followed her in boots, his hair undressed, and a glove upon the hand in which he held his cane and hat; from his right hand the glove was drawn off, and held between his palm and three last fingers, whilst he held out the first to meet the grasp of Sir Gilbert's entire hand, who led him by his extended finger to his daughter, and next to Rachel, whose

surprise may be easily conceived, when on turning towards Sir Bauble, her eyes, to which she had not given the licence of looking full upon the strangers on their first entering the apartment, she recognized in him the counsellor of the masquerade.

Thus suddenly surprised, she struggled in vain to prevent her countenance from undergoing a change of colour.—As to Sir Bauble, the most minute investigator of his features could not have read in them that he had ever seen Rachel before.—Lady Paragon and Miss Oxmondeley were in conversation together, and Sir Gilbert was the only person near them at their present formal introduction, and he was too much absorbed in his own concerns to attend to the emotion of Rachel, from which her pride assisted her in quickly recovering.

After the introduction to Rachel, Sir Bauble moved up to Miss Oxmondeley, and endeavoured, as far as a man can whose own person is his first object of admiration, to ingratiate himself into her good opinion, by a string of the most adulative compliments.

Lady

Lady Paragon conversed with Sir Gilbert, replying to his numerous inquiries after her health, how she had been favoured in regard to the roads and weather in her journey to and from Dover, and a variety of similar questions.

Rachel was meanwhile left to form her own observations and reflections; and she soon gathered from the conduct of Lady Paragon, and her son, that Sir Bauble warmly acceded to the proposal made to him by Sir Gilbert, through the means of Lady Paragon: Miss Oxmondeley's fate was thus sealed; and what a fate! she shuddered as she reflected on the libertinism of the man who would shortly hold dominion over the happiness of her friend.

Sir Gilbert's drawing-room was richly furnished; the walls crowded with paintings, and from chance, more than the knowledge of the owner, some were tolerably good.

Lady Paragon directed her son's attention to them, and asked his opinion of them; remarking, "that he had had an opportunity of learning the masters on their own soil."

Sir



Sir Bauble rose, and drawing from his breast a glass, which was suspended round his neck by a white satin ribband, placed it to his eye, and began to stare round for a subject to fix upon—"That's a decent copy of a charming original; that Salvator Rosa, I mean."

"That's not much a favourite of mine, Sir Bauble," replied the baronet, rising, and going up to the piece in question: "I don't much like those black rocks, they are so dark and dingey, one can hardly see what they are;—but the picture fitted the place very well, and so I bestowed a little extraordinary on the frame—it is a handsome frame enough, I think."

"Oh very, very," returned Sir Bauble; and proceeding to a painting which hung parallel with the windows, he exclaimed, "That picture hangs in a bad light; I can scarcely distinguish—a Magdalen, I think, Sir Gilbert?"

"No, Sir Bauble; it is a head of the Virgin Mary."

Sir Bauble bowed with a smile to the  
baronet,

baronet, returned his glass into his breast, and again placed himself by Miss Oxmondeley.

Sir Gilbert had before blamed his servants for bringing in the refreshments unbid; and they mistaking his partial censure for a general order, to his great uneasiness, Lady Paragon and Sir Bauble had been nearly half an hour arrived, and the delicacies did not make their appearance.

At length, apprehending some mistake, Sir Gilbert was on the point of rising and commanding their entrance, when Lady Paragon begged leave to have the bell pulled, and her carriage ordered.

"Don't be in a hurry, my lady," exclaimed the baronet, "pray don't, I must beg you'll take a little something before you go."

Lady Paragon never took anything before dinner; Sir Bauble the same.—Sir Gilbert urged the trite persuasion of all general rules having exceptions:—Lady Paragon coincided in the remark, but positively begged leave to decline exemplifying its veracity;—so did Sir Bauble, by whom the bell having

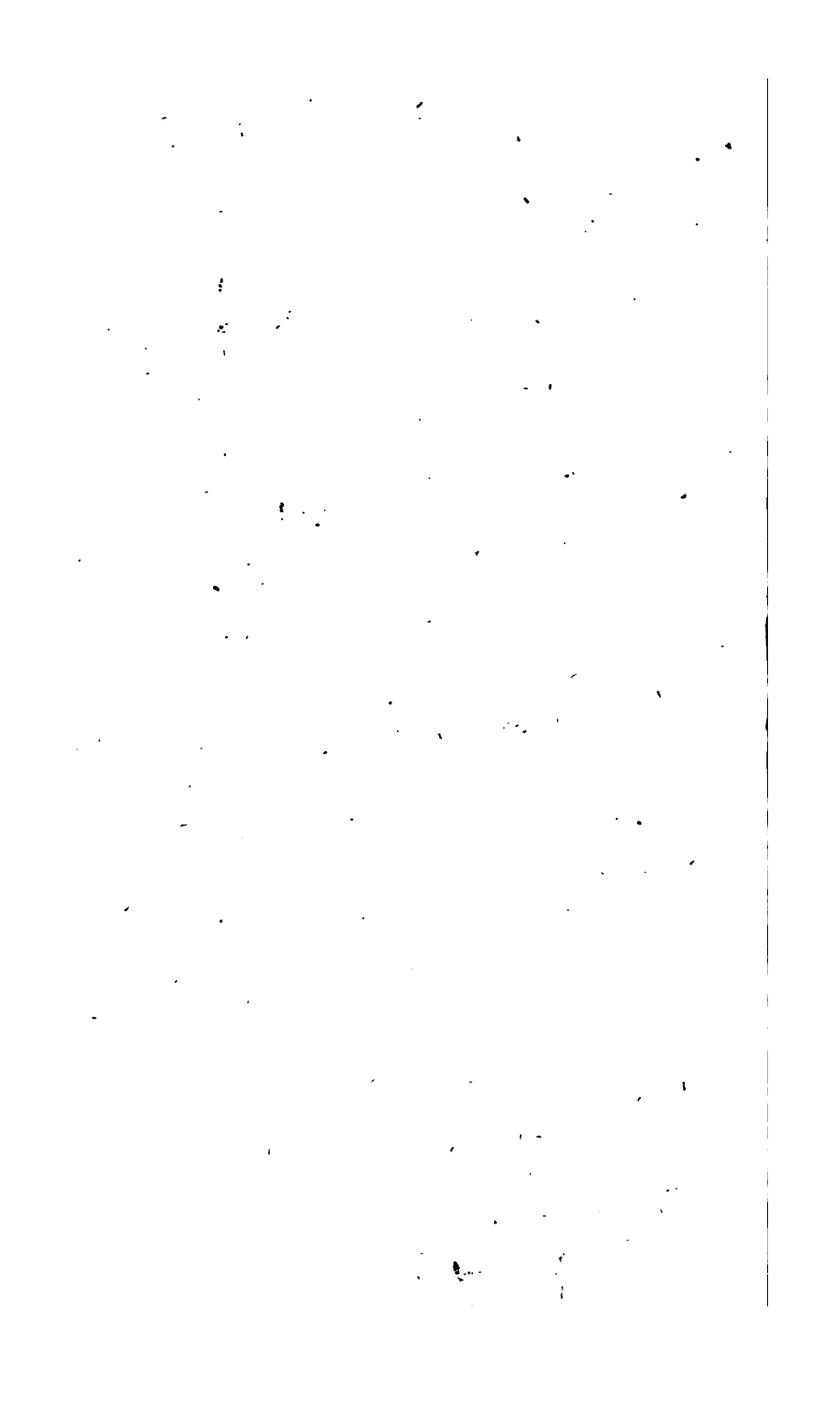
having been meanwhile pulled, a servant had entered, and Lady Paragon's carriage having been demanded, and announced to be at the door, her ladyship rose to depart, and Sir Gilbert was constrained to suffer compliance with his visitors positive refusals to predominate over the exhibition of his elegant good things.--One consolation, however, was afforded him, by Sir Bauble requesting an hour's private conversation with him on the following morning at one o'clock; a proposal to which Sir Gilbert agreed with a smirk of inward pleasure, and then with an apology pushed past him to hand Lady Paragon down stairs, and assist her into her carriage.

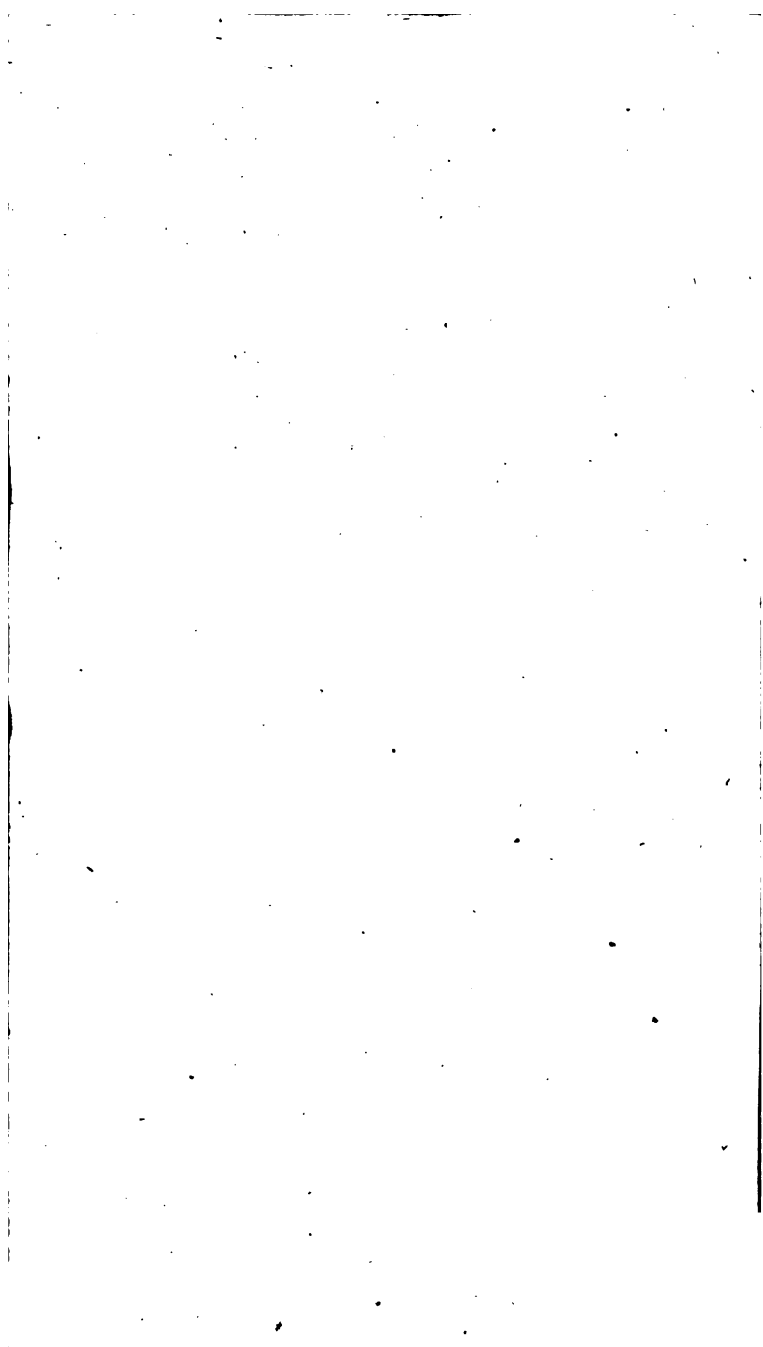
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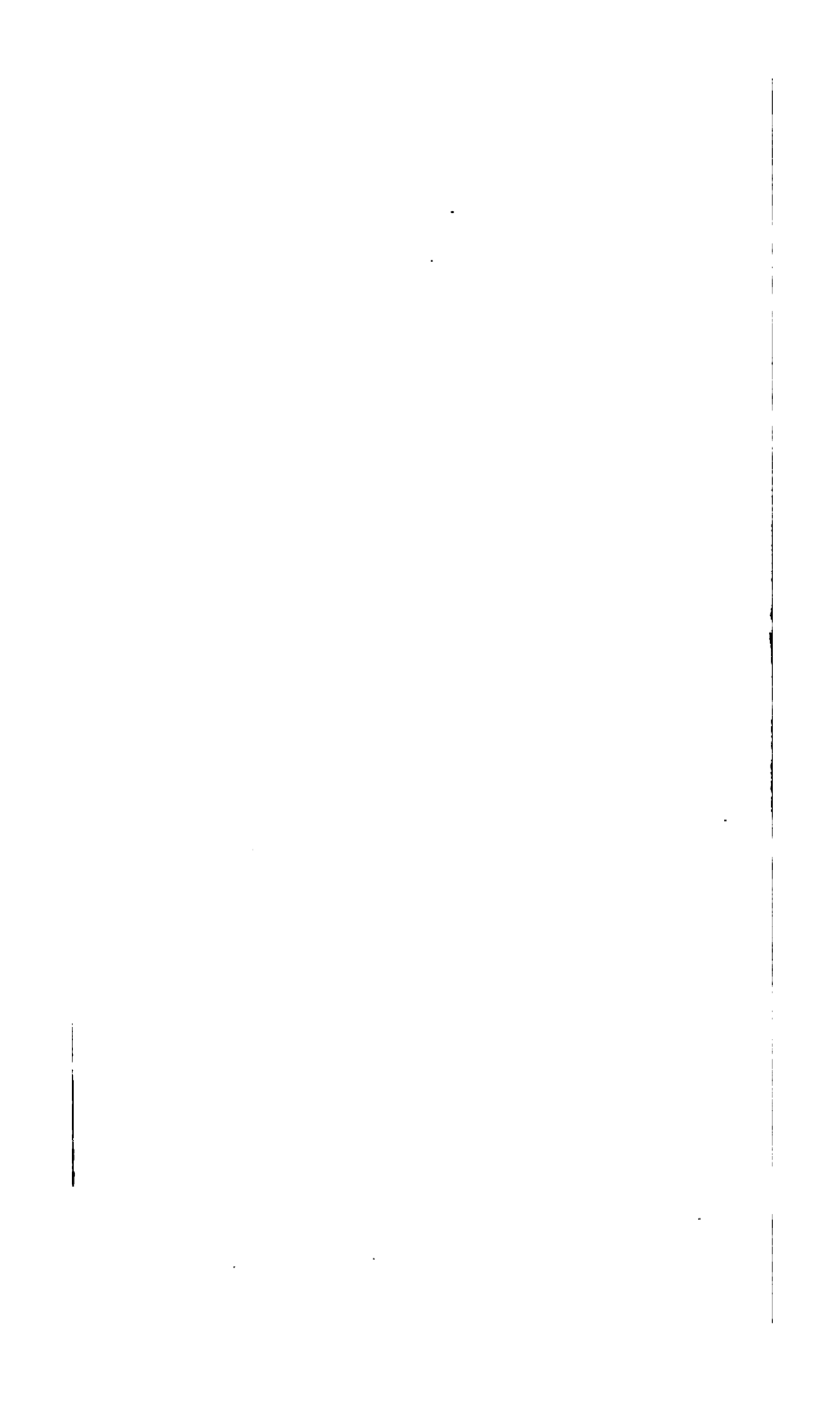


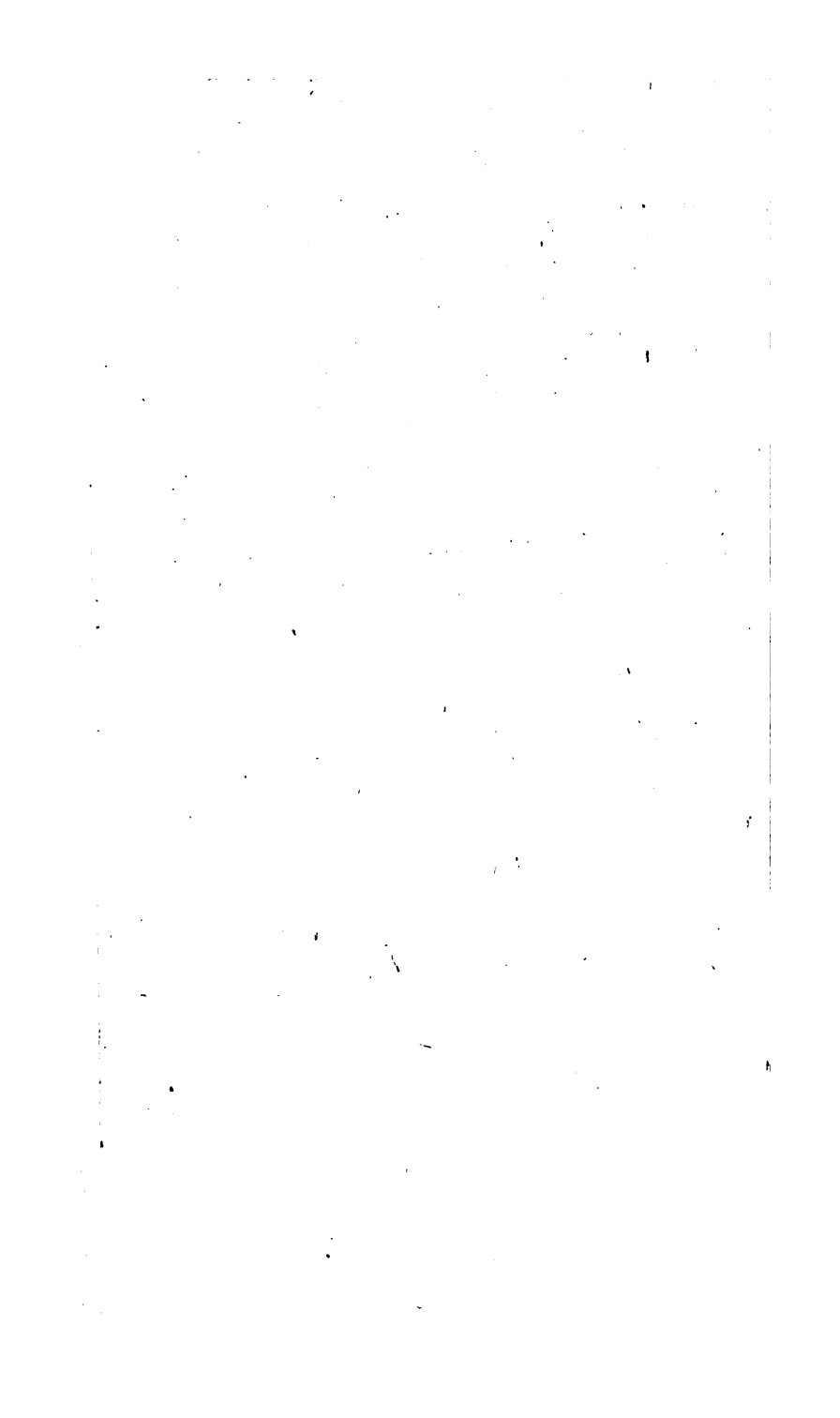


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